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ABSTRACT

Text of a Congressional hearing on the reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act is presented in this document. The hearing opens with a statement by Representative Dale E. Kildee, who states this hearing will focus on Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act which authorizes services for runaway and homeless youth in the Homeless Youth Act. He describes the goal of this act not as family unification, but as preparation for independent living. An additional statement by Representative Thomas J. Tauke describes the two groups of runaway youth needing help as those who need short-term assistance to return home, and those who cannot be returned home and are in great danger of exploitation and abuse. Testimony of these witnesses is presented: (1) Beverly Edmonds, executive director, Metro-Help, Chicago, Illinois; (2) James H. Walker, chair, board of directors, National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, Tulsa, Oklahoma; (3) Paget Wilson Hinch, associate commissioner, Family and Youth Services Bureau, Administration for Children, Youth and Families; (4) Deborah Shore, executive director, Sasha Bruce Youthwork; (5) Hida Avent, executive director, Stepping Stone; (6) Carol Thomas-Smedes, vice president, Michigan Network of Runaway and Youth Services; and (7) Mike Montoya, A Step Forward, The Sanctuary. Additional materials are included by witnesses giving testimony, persons representing other groups, and Representative Mickey Leland. (ABL)

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REAUTHORIZATION OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION ACT

Runaway and Homeless Youth

ED304655

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDREDTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

H.R. 1801

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, JANUARY 29, 1988

Serial No. 100-72

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REAUTHORIZATION OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION ACT

Runaway and Homeless Youth

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 1988

House of Representatives,
Subcommittee on Human Resources,
Committee on Education and Labor,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in room 2261, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Dale E. Kildee (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Members present: Representatives Kildee, Sawyer, and Tauke.

Staff present: Susan Wilhelm, staff director; Don Baker, chief counsel; S. Jefferson McFarland, subcommittee legislative counsel; Carol Behrer, legislative associate, minority; and Margaret Kajeckas, clerk.

Mr. Kildee. In real life I was a school teacher, so I usually start when the bell rings.

The Subcommittee on Human Resources convenes this morning to continue hearings on H.R. 1801, to reauthorize the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act for an additional four years.

Testimony this morning will focus on Title III of the JJDPA, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. Title III authorizes services to runaway youth, and has been an integral part of the JJDPA since its original enactment in 1974. In 1977, it was amended to include services for homeless youth.

Over the years, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act has made possible the provision of services to countless youth and families in crisis. In providing these services, we have learned a great deal about why youth run away and how to best provide assistance.

For example, we know that youth are usually running away from something. In fact, in some cases, running may be an act of survival. We also know that troubled youth generally come from troubled families. Experience has clearly demonstrated that we are most helpful to the youth when we help the family as a unit.

Homeless youth, however, do not have a family to which to return, so the goal of family reunification is inapplicable. Instead, the goal for homeless youth is preparation to live independently. Both runaway and homeless youth need the kinds of services authorized by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

Inevitably, this raises the question of how we best serve both with a level of funding, which to date has been insufficient, and one answer, of course, has been to advocate for more funding, which we continue to do, and we welcome your advocacy in that area also. Another answer is to look closely at how we currently spend the Federal dollars and how we order our priorities.

The testimony that we receive through these hearings is of great importance in helping us understand the extent of the needs and how the Act can be amended to better address those needs.

Those of you who know me know that I repeatedly say that the role of government is to promote, protect, defend and enhance human dignity. I try to examine every bill that comes before the Congress with that in mind. A youth who appreciates his or her own dignity is more likely to respect the dignity of others. Runaway programs that promote, protect, defend and enhance human dignity must provide more than just physical shelter. They should provide a nurturing environment in which youths are assisted and encouraged to love and respect themselves.

I myself am blessed with three teen-aged children—15, 16 and 17. The 17 year old will be 18 next Tuesday, as a matter of fact. So I am familiar with young people. And having taught high school for a number of years, I had that familiarity, too.

My youngest son, Paul, is 15 now. I can recall one evening when he was about 9 years old. I was tucking him into bed, hearing his prayers, and after he finished his formal prayers, he said, "I love God, I love mommy, I love daddy, I love Laura, I love David and I love me." And that was very important, that he had love for himself.

Every human being has dignity and we should respect that, and it is a good place to start with our own dignity and respect that dignity. These programs should help to build that self-esteem and dignity.

When I first got elected to the state legislature 23 years ago, I was assigned to the prisons committee and I used to visit from time to time the largest walled prison in the world, in Jackson, Michigan. I concluded after visiting there that most of the people who were there were there for one reason: they did not like themselves. They did not see their own dignity, didn't have good self-esteem.

I think that is very important that all these programs look beyond the physical needs, shelter needs, and look to the other more important needs of a young person, to have that self-esteem. Because when we help that person attain self-esteem and respect for their own dignity, they are more likely to respect the dignity of others, their life and property, and all society is safer when that happens.

I always encourage that aspect, which I know you understand very well, and those of you in the audience involved in this, having visited some of those shelters, recognize that very well. So I look forward to these hearings this morning to see how we can improve this.

Mr. Tauke, who is the Ranking Republican Member of the committee, I am sure has a statement.

Mr. TAUKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to join you in welcoming our witnesses this morning. In particular, I want to thank Paget Hinch for being here today to represent the Administration. As you know, Mr. Chairman, she is the Associate Commissioner of the Family and Youth Services

Bureau, Administration for Youth and Families. We look forward to your testimony and to working with you to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

I was pleased to join Chairman Kildee in introducing legislation reauthorizing this Act as well as the rest of the Juvenile Justice Act of 1974. A four-year extension of this Act will demonstrate the ongoing Federal commitment to assisting young people in crisis. Through the runaway and homeless youth program, we are able to help thousands of troubled, at-risk youth each year.

The majority of the young people served by runaway centers and shelters which receive funding from this program have not run far from home and need short-term assistance. These young people and their families are going through some form of crisis.

In a majority of these cases, the shelter, counseling and aftercare services provided by runaway shelters result in the positive placement of the child, either back home or in another appropriate setting. It is important to note that these services to the family are just as important, perhaps more, than services to the individual child.

A smaller percentage of the runaway and homeless youth population, but the group that perhaps has gained more public attention, are the children of the streets who cannot be returned home. While comprising a smaller segment of the runaway population, these children are in great danger of abuse and exploitation. These are the children that make the headlines and that are the subject of TV movies and drama shows.

It is critical that we serve both types of youth. Early intervention to the first- or second-time runner could prevent repeated running and possible exploitation on the streets in the future. More intensive services are required for the homeless young people who are existing any way that they can on the streets.

I would also like to use this opportunity to pay tribute to the many providers of Runaway Youth Services across the country, some of whom will appear before us today. With limited resources, these individuals and organizations deal with these things daily and confront problems ranging from drug abuse to sexual exploitation of our nation's children.

While in Iowa this past December for a hearing on this subject, Chairman Kildee and I had the opportunity to visit a runaway shelter, a Youth Emergency Services and Shelter in Des Moines. This opportunity to review a runaway program first-hand provided us with valuable insights into the operation of the runaway and homeless youth program. I am sure that the hearing this morning will further improve our understanding of the program and the issues involving runaway and homeless youth.

Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to the testimony today and to the suggestions of our witnesses in how we can best strengthen and improve this important Act.

Mr. **Kildee**. Thank you very much, Tom.

Congressman Sawyer from Ohio.

Mr. **Sawyer**. Thank you very much, Chairman Kildee. It is a pleasure to join with you and Congressman Tauke in this important undertaking this morning.

With a name like Tom Sawyer, I certainly have been reminded almost on a daily basis throughout my life of the works of Mark Twain. Certainly one of Twain's more colorful characters, in addition to Tom Sawyer, was Huckleberry Finn, whose story is in another time and in another setting, but strikingly similar to the kinds of problems that we seek to deal with today. Huck lived with a father whose substance abuse led to his abuse of Huck.

Huck's life on the Mississippi River was full of adventure. But with the fear and the violence that he experienced, he found himself in many of the same kinds of situations that face today's runaways. Huck's salvation, ulimately, was the support of his community.

Today's runaways are not always as fortunate, but because of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, many children in crisis can find safety and guidance in shelters across the country.

Appropriately enough, one of the oldest, widely respected shelters in the country, located in my State of Ohio, is called Huckleberry House.

The shelters are strengthening family relationships and helping youth in crisis to work through problems and decide upon a future course of action. Over one million youths runaway each year and 80 percent are returned home to relatives or friends. That is an amazing statistic and it shows the great value and success of both the shelter program and the runaway hotlines.

Adolescents are one of the most neglected and misunderstood segments of our population. At school and at home, children are facing incredible pressure and problems too large for them, and sometimes for their families, to tackle alone. The dedicated professionals who staff the runaway shelters and hotlines have helped many children regain their self esteem and begin to take control of their lives.

I am sure that the testimony we will hear today—certainly from Mike Montoya, our young witness from Michigan—will attest to the valuable services these shelters provide. Mike is a shining example of what government and communities can do when they work together, and we need to encourage public and private sector support for these kinds of programs.

We also need to look at the need for increased funds for basic shelter grants. Many existing shelters are operating on shoestring budgets, a difficult task given the changing needs of their clients. More shelters are desperately needed, but to do so requires the draining of funds from existing shelters. That dilemma must be corrected.

Independent living programs are needed to assist the growing number of homeless youths, and programs are needed to deal with the rising incidence of youth suicide. We need to find new ways to help shelters find these needed programs.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to discussing these issues with our witnesses today, and to continuing in the dialogue when the Subcommittee travels to Akron in March. Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Tom. I look forward to that hearing in Akron also.

Our first witness is Paget Hinch, Associate Commissioner for Family and Youth Services, Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, Department of Health and Human Services.

We welcome you here this morning and send our greetings to Dottie Borup. We have appreciated her cooperation with this committee. Your entire statement will be made part of the record. If you wish to summarize, we would encourage that. Go ahead.

STATEMENT OF PAGET WILSON HINCH, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER, FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Ms. **Hinch**. I am, as you said, Paget Wilson Hinch, Associate Commissioner for the Families and Youth Services Bureau in the Administration for Children, Youth and Families. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before this distinguished subcommittee to discuss the reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Act, Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. I am well aware of the subcommittee's concern for children, youth and families, and the programs which serve them, and let me assure you that we share that concern. I am accompanied today by Dominic Mastrapasqua, Deputy Associate Commissioner of the Family and Youth Services Bureau.

In 1973, the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare established an Intra-Departmental Committee on Runaway youth. This was in response to national concerns about runaways, escalating numbers of delinquency cases brought into juvenile courts throughout the country, and the determination of the Senate Judiciary Committee to develop an alternative to jail for status offenders. The following year, Congress established the Runaway Youth Program under Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. In 1977, the program was broadened to include homeless youth. In 1980, the grant funding process was statutorily changed to include a state allocation based on youth population. The program was again reauthorized in 1984.

The Runaway and Homeless Act provides funds for community based programs that primarily serve the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families. The Act authorizes grants for such services as temporary, short term shelter, counseling and aftercare in settings outside the law enforcement and juvenile justice systems. The program is administered by the Family and Youth Services Bureau, a part of the Administration for Children, Youth and Families, within the Office of Human Development Services.

The authorization for the runaway and homeless youth program expires at the end of fiscal year 1988 and the Administration supports reauthorization of this program. We will be submitting a legislative proposal, and see no reason to propose any major changes in the program. We look forward to working with your committee on this important legislation.

Now I will summarize some of the recent accomplishments of the runaway and homeless youth program, highlighting services provided by the basic centers, the national runaway hotline, the networks, and the demonstration grantees.

In fiscal year 1987, we awarded grants totaling nearly $20 million to 307 runaway and homeless youth centers in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Palau, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

Last year the runaway and homeless youth centers provided ongoing crisis intervention and shelter services to approximately 85,000 youth. Another 255,000 youth received one time counseling or referral services on a drop-in basis, for a total of approximately 340,000 youth served.

As part of our continuing effort to strengthen runaway and homeless youth services to native American youth and their families, in FY 1987 we funded an additional four center grants with money provided by the Administration for Native Americans. These four grants are in addition to six other center grants to native American organizations, funded with runaway and homeless youth program funds.

In 1987, approximately 53 percent of the youth who received shelter services were reunited with their families. Thirty-seven percent were placed in other positive living arrangements such as the homes of friends or relatives, foster care, independent living programs, or boarding schools. An estimated five percent returned to the streets. For the remaining five percent the centers had no information on the final disposition of the youth.

While the youth served range in age from under 11 up to 18, the average age is 15. The centers serve slightly more families than males. Nationally, white predominated among the youth served, and 17 percent were black, eight percent Hispanic, and six percent Asian or native American. Nearly half of the youth served had never run away before, but 17 percent had run away more than five times.

Fully two-thirds of the youth seek services because of problems with parental relationships. But other frequently given reasons for seeking services include poor self-image, depression, truancy, bad grades, juvenile justice problems, and drug or alcohol abuse. Most of the youth served by the centers do not run very far. Fifty-two percent remained within ten miles of home, but 12 percent ran more than 50 miles.

Over the past three years, the runaway and homeless youth program has provided services to hundreds of thousands of youth and their families through the toll free runaway switchboard (1-800-621-4000). This hotline, operated by Metro Help, Inc., in Chicago, is unique in the breadth of services it provides.

We supported the switchboard in fiscal year 1987 at a level of $350,000. This switchboard operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with trained volunteers who provide almost all of the telephone services. Since fiscal year 1985, the switchboard has also operated as the national youth suicide hotline.

Networking Grants: Networks are associations of runaway youth programs and other youth serving agencies, which are intended to strengthen the coordination of resources and services to runaway and homeless youth and their families. The networks serve a training and information distribution function as well, enabling the shelter grantees to better coordinate activities and assist one another.

The fiscal year 1987 we funded on networking grantee in each of the ten HHS regions, with a total expenditure of approximately $644,000.

The administering this program, we often use our demonstration funds to address issues identified by shelter staff and directors at the local level. In my written statement I have discussed a number of these projects and how they support the basic centers.

In fiscal year 1987, we awarded 27 new discretionary grants in 20 states. Runaway youth shelters or coordinated networks were either the grantee or an equal partner in 234 of them.

It has been our consistent practice in funding discretionary program support activity to require that shelters or coordinated networks be the grantee or a partner.

The fiscal year 1988, with a total appropriation of over $26 million, ACYF expects to award grants in support of an estimated 315 centers for runaway and homeless youth. We will continue funding for the National Runaway Switchboard, and will work with the switchboard to increase its volunteer capability to serve increased numbers of youth and families.

Additional fiscal year 1988 funds will be devoted to the support of networking grantees and a special effort to provide on site training to shelter staff and volunteers to equip them to address critical hazards to street youth, including sexual exploitation, AIDS and drugs.

As you know, a study of the causes of homelessness in adolescent youth was mandated by the Congress. We are currently designing this study and expect study outcomes to be available in about 18 months.

This concludes my prepared remarks. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today and I will take any questions that you may have.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you, Paget, for your testimony.

[The prepared statement of Paget Wilson Hinch follows:]

Statement of

Paget Wilson Hinch

Associate Commissioner

Family and Youth Services Bureau

Administration for Children, Youth and Families

before the

Subcommittee on Human Resources

of the

Committee on Education and Labor

U. S. House of Representatives

January 29, 1988

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before this distinguished subcommittee to discuss the reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, of 1974. I am well aware of the Subcommittee's concern for children, youth and families, and the programs which serve them, and let me assure you that we share this concern. I am accompanied today by Dominic Mastrapasqua, Deputy Associate Commissioner of the Family and Youth Services Bureau.

In 1973, the Secretary of the then Department of Health, Education and Welfare established an Intra-Departmental Committee on Runaway Youth. This was in response to national concerns about runaways, escalating numbers of delinquency cases brought into juvenile courts throughout the country, and the determination of the Senate Judiciary Committee to develop an alternative to jail for status offenders. The following year, Congress established the Runaway Youth Program under Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. In 1977, the program was broadened to include homeless youth. In 1980, the grant funding process was statutorily changed to include a State allocation based on youth population. The program was again reauthorized in 1984.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act provides funds for community-based programs that primarily serve the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families. The Act authorizes grants for such services as temporary, short-term shelter, counseling, and aftercare in settings outside the law enforcement and juvenile justice systems. The program is administered by the Family and Youth Services Bureau, a part of the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), within the Office of Human Development Services.

PROPOSED REAUTHORIZATION

The authorization for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program expires at the end of FY 1988 and the Administration supports reauthorization of this program. We will be submitting a legislative proposal, and see no reason to propose any major changes in the program. We look forward to working with your committee on this important legislation.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Now I will summarize some of the recent accomplishments of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, highlighting services provided by the basic centers, the national runaway hotline, the networks, and the demonstration grantees.

BASIC CENTER GRANTS

In Fiscal Year 1987, we awarded grants totalling nearly $20 million to 307 runaway and homeless youth centers in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Palau, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

As you know, we have instituted a three year funding cycle for center grant awards. Roughly two-thirds of the Fiscal Year 1987 grants were awarded on a non-competitive basis, to grantees which had received multi-year awards in FY 1986. The other third of the grants was awarded on the basis of competition.

Last year the runaway and homeless youth centers provided ongoing crisis intervention and shelter services to approximately 85,000 youth. Another 255,000 youth received one-time counseling or referral services on a "drop-in" basis, for a total of approximately 340,000 youth served.

As a part of our continuing effort to strengthen runaway and homeless youth services to Native American youth and their families, in FY 1987 we funded an additional four center grants with money provided by the Administration for Native Americans (ANA). These four grants are in addition to six other center grants to Native American organizations, funded with Runaway and Homeless Youth Program funds.

In 1987, approximately 53 percent of the youth who received shelter services were reunited with their families. Thirty-seven percent were placed in other positive living arrangements such as the homes of friends or relatives, foster care, independent living programs, or boarding schools. An estimated five percent returned to the streets. For the remaining five percent the centers had no information on the final disposition of the youth.

While the youth served range in age from under eleven up to eighteen, the average age is fifteen. The centers serve slightly more females (57%) than males. Nationally, whites predominated among the youth served (69%), and 17 percent were black, 8 percent Hispanic, and 6 percent Asian or Native American. Nearly half of the youth served had never run away before, but 16 percent had run away more than five times.

Fully two-thirds of the youth seek services because of problems with parental relationships. But other frequently-given reasons for seeking services include poor self-image, depression, truancy, bad grades, juvenile justice problems, and drug or alcohol abuse. Most of the youth served by the centers do not run very far: 52 percent remained within ten miles of home; but 12 percent ran more than 50 miles.

RUNAWAY HOTLINE SWITCHBOARD

Over the past three years, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program has provided services to hundreds of thousands of youth and their families through the toll-free Runaway Switchboard (1-800-621-4000). This hotline, operated by Metro Help, Inc., in Chicago, is unique in the breadth of services it provides.

We supported the Switchboard in Fiscal Year 1987 at a level of $350,000. This Switchboard operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with trained volunteers who provide almost all of the telephone services. Since Fiscal Year 1985, the switchboard has also operated as the national youth suicide hotline.

NETWORKING GRANTS

Networks are associations of runaway youth programs and other youth-serving agencies, which are intended to strengthen the coordination of resources and services to runaway and homeless youth and their families. The networks serve a training and information-distribution function as well, enabling the shelter grantees to better coordinate activities and assist one another.

In Fiscal Year 1987 we funded one networking grantee in each of the ten HHS regions, with a total expenditure of approximately $644,000.

DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

In administering this program, we often use our demonstration funds to address issues identified by shelter staff and directors at the local level. Some of these projects include the following:

COMBATTING JUVENILE PROSTITUTION

Juvenile prostitution has been, and is, of major concern as it impacts the youth at-risk population. Its linkages with drug abuse and AIDS also make it a priority concern.

The culmination of several years of effort by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program is a major publication on combatting juvenile prostitution, jointly published by the National Association of Counties (NACO) and the National Resource Center for Youth Services. First, we studied the causes of juvenile prostitution. Second, we looked at various successful approaches to address this problem. Finally, we tested and documented model interventions. The results were translated into an action guide for county officials and the reviews of the book have been good. NACO has developed an excellent marketing effort, and the National Resource Center for Youth Services, which is stocking and selling the book, has done a major mailing promotion effort.

YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION

Runaway shelter staff expressed growing concern about handling severely depressed youth who they feared were at risk of suicide. They also cited the need for the development of models that would produce more responsive service linkages. In response, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program funded a group of projects to address this specific issue.

Several major products emerged from this cluster of projects. The first was a computerized staff training curriculum. It was successfully tested in training staff trainers from each of the shelters in the Southeast Region (Region IV). National demonstration workshops have been held at the National Resource Center for Youth Services conference in 1986. Other national demonstrations have been supplied to NACO, the National Sheriffs Association, the American Association of Suicidology, and each of the services in the Department of Defense.

A project conducted by Columbia University produced a screen to help determine if a youth is at-risk of suicide. Previous screens have been in use but are highly error-prone. The Columbia screen (ARIDS) is a breakthrough in the state-of-the-art. Currently, validation testing is being completed on the screen and the results are to be published in scientific journals. Acceptance by the scientific community will trigger a greatly expanded national use of the tool. Virtually all youth service organizations, residential programs and educational programs will be able to benefit from this material.

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

For years shelters have struggled to discover effective means of outreach to prevent runaway behavior.

Statistics on families in the workplace and other research data suggest that, in addition to churches and school PTA's, one of the major places to reach parents about prevention of runaway behavior and address other pertinent adolescent issues is the workplace. Consequently, in Fiscal Years 1986 and 1987, we funded a cluster of projects referred to as corporate partnerships. In these projects we funded shelters to experiment and design model programs that can be made available in the work place through corporate employee assistance programs. Currently shelters have projects working with such corporate entities as Honeywell and Bethlehem Steel, providing outreach, prevention information, and referral assistance to employees.

AT RISK YOUTH AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

In 1987, as another link in the chain of meeting the needs of older and homeless adolescents, we entered into a partnership with the Department of Labor to effect greater use of Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) monies for our at risk populations.

The major thrust of this effort is not only in redirecting the use of JTPA monies, but increasing the understanding and the involvement of Private Industry Council (PIC) leadership in meeting the needs of specific populations of at-risk youth - i.e., older adolescents in foster care and homeless youth in independent living programs.

Twelve projects were funded in Fiscal Year 1987 to provide youth employment services to our target population. The total funding was slightly over half a million dollars, of which the Title III share was under $150,000. Each project had to be a documented partnership between a PIC and a Runaway and Homeless Youth Center.

In Fiscal Year 1987, we awarded 27 new discretionary grants in 20 States. Runaway youth shelters or coordinated networks were either the grantee or an equal partner in 24 of them.

It has been our consistent practice in funding discretionary program support activity to require that shelters or coordinated networks be the grantee or a partner.

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR YOUTH SERVICES

Program descriptions, how-to-manuals, and identified expertise from our shelters are currently housed in the National Resource Center for Youth Services in Oklahoma. This Center is one of several resource centers funded by ACYF.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Program uses the National Center for marketing and dissemination of information and products developed under our model program efforts. The National Center enhances and expands the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program's capacity to provide information, training and technical assistance to the service programs that address our target population.

SAFEPLACE

Another recent significant effort has been Project SAFEPLACE. This is a community-wide volunteer model for increasing a local community's capacity to meet needs of runaway and homeless youth. Local businesses and other organizations are asked to display a SAFEPLACE sign and serve as an immediate refuge and link to a runaway youth center. The SAFEPLACES program is being implemented in nearly 100 communities in the country now. Local funding sources for SAFEPLACE include such groups as Junior Leagues, the Southland Corp., State Farm Bureaus, banks, United Ways, city governments, local foundations, YMCA's, local department stores, the Gannett Foundation, Kiwanis Clubs, and Rotary Clubs. SAFEPLACE was developed by one of our shelters, Shelter House in Louisville, Kentucky, and has been very successful. We have provided special training on SAFEPLACE to our Regional networking grantees, which in turn serve as a training and technical assistance source for our shelters on a regional basis. In Fiscal Year 1988, we will be setting goals by region and hope to more than double the number of SAFEPLACES.

COORDINATION WITH DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

We participate in the work of the Justice Department's Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and coordinate activities of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program with the National Center on Missing and Exploited

Children. In addition, we were also active in the Committee on High Risk Youth of the National Drug Policy Board. Finally, we cooperated in a number of activities with the National Institute of Corrections.

PLANS FOR THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR

In Fiscal Year 1988, with a total appropriation of over $26 million, ACYF expects to award grants in support of an estimated 315 centers for runaway and homeless youth. We will continue funding for the National Runaway Switchboard, and will work with the Switchboard to increase its volunteer capability to serve increased numbers of youth and families.

Additional Fiscal Year 1988 funds will be devoted to the support of Networking grantees and a special effort to provide on-site training to shelter staff and volunteers to equip them to address critical hazards to street youth, including sexual exploitation, AIDS and drugs.

In Fiscal Year 1988 there are several issues we will address through our discretionary efforts. These priority areas are discussed in the Office of Human Development Services FY 1988 Coordinated Discretionary Funds Program Announcement published in the Federal Register December 30, 1987. These priority areas include:

- Challenge Grants to Community Foundations: Mainstreaming Troubled Youth
- Challenge Grants to Foundations: Independent Living for Older Homeless Youth
- Improving Minority Participation in Runaway and Homeless Youth Centers
- Developing An Urban Strategy for Prevention of Youth Suicide

All of these priority areas require that a runaway and homeless youth shelter or coordinated network be the applicant or be a partner in the proposed endeavor.

In Fiscal Year 1988, we have in process an evaluation project which is looking at the question of what happens to youth when they leave our shelters. We expect the evaluation to be completed by the end of 1989.

As you know, a study of the causes of homelessness in adolescent youth was mandated by the Congress. We are currently designing this study and expect study outcomes to be available in about eighteen months.

Finally, we are planning several major dissemination efforts with national organizations in 1988 and expect to make appropriate materials and technical assistance available to the armed forces Family Resource Centers to enhance their ability to meet the needs of adolescent youth in military families.

This concludes my prepared remarks. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I will be pleased to answer any question that you may have.

Mr. **Kildee**. Do you have any solid estimates on how many young people run away, how many are homeless, and what percentage of those are being served by the shelters?

Ms. **Hinch**. That is a very elusive figure. Right now we guess that there are about—and it is a very professional guess—about a million runaways, runaway and homeless youth out there. There is a national incident study being conducted right now to determine what that figure actually is.

Mr. **Kildee**. Have you seen in recent years a leveling off or an increase in the number of young people that run away?

Ms. **Hinch**. It has pretty much remained static, within a thousand, tens of thousands.

Mr. **Kildee**. When we were in Iowa what we discovered was that one of the centers had been funded one year and then another center received funding and they lost their funding, and the following year the other center lost its funding, and they got their funding back. Can you describe some of the problems we have in trying to increase the number of shelters, while at the same time not undercutting the financial situation for an existing shelter?

Ms. **Hinch**. In order to adhere to the principles of competition, we need to take into consideration not only the need and the existence of a grantee, but how well they compete among the other applicants from their state.

Mr. **Kildee**. We have, though, another shelter being opened which we would encourage. Having been around the country a bit, I can see the need for shelters. Would it not be more appropriate for the Congress—and this is our job, and your job to guide us—to recognize the need for more shelters and increase both the authorization level and the appropriations for those shelters.

Ms. **Hinch**. That could be a consideration within the scope of the runaway and homeless youth program as it exists now. However, let me give an example in Michigan, if I may. You had existing, I believe 13 existing federally funded shelters when the competition came up this last year, and of the eight that competed, or of the nine that competed, eight were existing in the competition, the new one that came in scored actually higher than any of the other applicants.

Rather than no fund, one that had already been funded previously, we gave it a lower grant, gave it what money we could, rather than not fund it at all.

Mr. **Kildee**. So the amount of authorization and appropriation does force upon you very difficult choices?

Ms. **Hinch**. It can.

Mr. **Kildee**. From that I would conclude that, in setting priorities in the country, children should be a high priority, and Congress might then look at this terrible decision we force you into of underfunding one shelter in order to—or funding less, let's say—so you can fund another shelter. Congress might look at priorities and say that we do have to then fund the priority children at a higher level.

Ms. **Hinch**. That is true, but we also have to consider the fact that these shelters are very industrious, and I am not saying they don't need funding from us, but they have been very industrious in their search for other forms of funding, such as the Office of Juvenile Justice, local foundations, fund raising activities.

Mr. **Kildee**. Of course, the Pentagon is very industrious too. Perhaps we can let them have a bake sale or something to run their operation. There would be a change in this country. They are very innovative over there across the river.

You do use some of your funding for discretionary programs?

Ms. **Hinch**. Yes.

Mr. **Kildee**. Is there specific language in the law for that discretionary funding, or should the Congress in reauthorization include some specific language for discretionary funding?

Ms. **Hinch**. Well, Mr. Chairman, we feel that the legislation is sufficiently broad right now for us to allow ourselves to address the special needs and problems that face the shelters.

Mr. **Kildee**. OK.

Mr. Tauke.

Mr. **Tauke**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, thank you for your testimony. I think it was very helpful.

How do you determine each year what areas or issues should be targeted for demonstration funds?

Ms. **Hinch**. We listen to the shelters. They indicate to us what the specific needs are, where the biggest problems are, and we have a lot of respect for what they tell us, and we do indeed take their advice.

Mr. **Tauke**. Is there some kind of formalized process you go through, or informal?

Ms. **Hinch**. It is an informal decision process.

Mr. **Tauke**. As the chairman indicated, there is concern about spreading a constant appropriation over an expanding number of shelters around the country. What is the average amount of a basic center grant?

Ms. **Hinch**. The average is $65 to $70,000. We have a maximum of $150,000 and some grants as little as $11 or $12,000.

Mr. **Tauke**. The $11,000 or $12,000 is the minimum and $150,000 is the maximum?

Ms. **Hinch**. Sixty-five or $70,000 is the average.

Mr. **Tauke**. Has this average amount been increasing?

Ms. **Hinch**. Slightly. The appropriations has increased, but the proportion has pretty much remained the same.

Mr. **Tauke**. We have had some suggestions that we establish some kind of minimum grant amount in order to prevent the dilution of these funds. Do you think that is a good idea?

Ms. **Hinch**. We would certainly entertain that. We have no official stand on that at all. So if you think that would be useful——

Mr. **Tauke**. Do you have a particular figure in mind to what would be a reasonable figure for a minimum grant?

Ms. **Hinch**. We have discussed that, and at this point Vermont and the District of Columbia are a little under $50,000. So if you were to say $50,000, it would hardly benefit those lower shelters. Seventy-five thousand dollars might be realistic.

Mr. **Tauke**. If you do set a minimum grant, what is the impact on others? I mean, are we—in an unjustified way—taking money from somebody to give it to somebody else, or what is the practical impact of that?

Ms. **Hinch**. You are talking—are you talking about a state minimum?

Mr. **Tauke**. No, I am talking about an individual shelter minimum grant, I believe.

Ms. **Hinch**. I am trying to explain——

Mr. **Tauke**. You were talking about a state?

Ms. **Hinch**. Well, I was talking about—if you apply the formula to the amount that is available for the shelters, are you suggesting that we would be taking money from the total balance in order to give a particular grant, a minimum? If, for instance——

Mr. **Tauke**. I am saying if you were giving a grant to a certain shelter, there would be at least a certain amount available or you would not have a grant, let's say $10,000 or more.

Ms. **Hinch**. That would have to come out of the original total figure, I would imagine, before you apply the formula. Therefore, you wouldn't be taking it, although you would if there is only so much money.

Mr. **Tauke**. OK. Well, if you have any recommendations in that regard, I think we would appreciate those recommendations.

How many basic grant applications are denied each year?

Ms. **Hinch**. That varies from year to year, depending on the competition in each state.

Mr. **Tauke**. Are half of them denied, or——

Ms. **Hinch**. In California we get many, many applications. You might find a third of them can't be funded, not only because there isn't enough money, because they just don't compete well. It is not always a case of lack of funds. In some states there is no competition.

Mr. **Tauke**. That raises, of course, the question about the state allocation formula. Right now it is based on under age 18 population, is that correct?

Ms. **Hinch**. Yes.

Mr. **Tauke**. Some states have relatively stable, I suppose, under age 18 populations, with relatively few runaways, and other states would have a higher percentage of runaways. Is the allocation on the basis of under age 18 population a wise decision, or should we be looking for some other means to allocate funds?

Ms. **Hinch**. That is a difficult question, Mr. Tauke. It seems to work as well as any formula does right now. We have no suggestions for another formula.

Mr. **Tauke**. If we were going to go look at some other factors to take into consideration, what measurable factors might we look at?

Ms. **Hinch**. One might—I will tell you something you might not look at. One might consider out of state runaways, for instance, that one segment of the country attracts, or one state attracts more runaways than another. But based on the data that we have, that really isn't so. You would think in New York, Hollywood, most of the runaways who run to Hollywood are from Southern California. Most of the runaways who run away to Times Square are from New York City. Surprisingly enough, the greatest percentage of out of state runaways exist in Utah and Kansas.

Mr. **Tauke**. Maybe they are a lot smarter than we give them credit for. I would have known that for sure if you had said Iowa. You indicated some states have very little competition. They use their allotment but they have little competition. Is that because in those states the money is simply sufficient to meet the need in your view?

Ms. **Hinch**. I would imagine that any state would not tell you that.

Mr. **Tauke**. I understand that, but I am asking you that.

Ms. **Hinch**. I think that some of the states are very well organized and they have allocated among themselves where they would like to see the money go, and we appreciate that in a sense, because they are so organized they can meet the needs of the youth.

Mr. **Tauke**. Maybe let me ask the question another way then. Under the current formula, do you think that we are meeting a greater portion of the need in some states than we are in other states?

Ms. **Hinch**. I don't think really any greater in one than another. The population shifts from year to year, and in just—I know what you are getting at. I have to be definitive about it, because it is—the runaways are so elusive and just because the ones we count are the ones we know about, doesn't mean that the need doesn't exist everywhere.

Mr. **Tauke**. I understand that is it very difficult to get a handle on it. Is there any kind of national incident study that is——

Ms. **Hinch**. That actually is being conducted right now.

Mr. **Tauke**. When would we expect to get some results?

Ms. **Hinch**. I am not exactly sure. It is being done through the Office of Juvenile Justice by the University of New Hampshire. I imagine within the year.

Mr. **Tauke**. Do you think it might be worthwhile to base our allocation on something like the result of that study?

Ms. **Hinch**. It might be. We are interested in seeing what the results of that study are.

Mr. **Tauke**. Thank you very much. We appreciate your testimony.

Mr. **Kildee**. Mr. Sawyer.

Mr. **Sawyer**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In your testimony you touched on a number of the research and demonstration grants which you have made. Those all appear worthwhile. How much of the appropriated money under the Act is used for that kind of effort?

Ms. **Hinch**. In total or in the increase, or are you looking for both?

Mr. **Sawyer**. I am looking for a percentage or dollars, either way.

Ms. **Hinch**. Well, I meant the total appropriation or the increase. In the increase, virtually I think two percent of the increase will be used for discretionary programs.

Mr. **Sawyer**. How much overall within the total funding.

Ms. **Hinch**. You know, I don't have that percentage exactly. I can get it for you, but let me address it a different way. Eighty-two percent, 83 percent of the overall budget goes directly to the basic centers, while the remaining portions indirectly to the centers, not only in the shelter demonstration models, but in the networks for which we are mandated, the communications system. The hotline and the high impact grants, which are grants made directly to shelters as well.

Mr. Sawyer. Those you don't consider demonstration?

Ms. Hinch. The high impact grant we don't, but there are demonstration grants that we do.

Mr. Sawyer. You don't have a clear sense of how much within that total appropriations does go to them?

Ms. Hinch. It is about seven percent.

Mr. Sawyer. What kind of results do you get from these projects, and how do you put those results to work?

Ms. Hinch. The money is actually used to fund a demonstration project. It must be a model that they are developing. First of all, there must be a need and it must be developed so that it can be replicated throughout the country. We do disseminate the successful products, most of which are successful. Therefore, it bottoms from time to time.

Mr. Sawyer. That is why they call them experiments?

Ms. Hinch. Right. They disseminate these throughout the country. This is a youth self-sufficiency model, for example, that was developed and disseminated and is being disseminated throughout are National Youth Resource Centers throughout the country, and this is combating juvenile prostitution, which is not only of interest to the shelters, but to the National Sheriff's Associations.

This is a training manual on suicide prevention, which as you probably well know, is a problem that faces shelter staff, and they brought it to our attention, and we addressed that with a cluster of demonstration grants facing youth suicide and this is one that we are very proud of.

This is Project Safe Place, which is a community based program that offers—puts these symbols in all of the hangouts where the kids might go, MacDonalds and truckstops and 7-11s. Southland Corporation has been very active in this, and the community has to get involved and become a safe place where the young person can go into the 7-11, and say I need help. The proprietor calls the shelter and the shelter sends a volunteer to pick up the young person and bring them to the shelter and they are handled as any other runaway or homeless youth who would enter the shelter.

Mr. Sawyer. From these research grants materials are developed that can be used other places?

Ms. Hinch. Absolutely.

Mr. Sawyer. Do you have any record of how they are applied programmatically? How the results are applied practically, as opposed to the dissemination of information?

Ms. Hinch. After we disseminate them——

Mr. Sawyer. Do you track them, how they are used and what is the success?

Ms. Hinch. We try to track them and we know numbers, for instance, of how many communities have initiated a Safe Place program.

Mr. Sawyer. It is not fair to ask you that sort of thing in detail, but I would be interested in how the results of that seven percent of the money is used to expand in application elsewhere.

Let me come at it from the other side, and touch on something that both of the previous Congressmen asked about. There have been proposals to require certain percentages of the total allocation to be used for basic center grants. How do you react to those kinds of promises. So that we are not getting about 82–83 percent, but that there be a fixed percentage that would go to basic center grants?

Ms. **Hinch**. Certainly we would abide by the regulations after maximum or minimum amount that has been spent on shelters, but I need to point out to you that the small percentage of the allocation that is spent on demonstration grants buys a whole lot more than it could if the amount were divided among the shelters, and they had to develop these programs on their own.

Mr. **Sawyer**. If there were to be a minimum figure for basic center grants, do you have any notion of where that ought to fall?

Ms. **Hinch**. Do you mean a minimum per grant?

Mr. **Sawyer**. Percentage of the total allocation?

Ms. **Hinch**. I don't have a position on that.

Mr. **Sawyer**. 82 or 83%, are you telling me that is about right, or it may be appropriately higher or lower?

Ms. **Hinch**. I think we are very comfortable right where we are.

Mr. **Sawyer**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. **Kildee**. Thank you, thank you, Mr. Sawyer. One final question. In your discretionary funding, do you fund independent living programs? I know you fund the shelters, but for those who need independent living situations, are you funding some of those at the present time?

Ms. **Hinch**. Our money goes directly to the shelter for crisis intervention. There are some very fine independent living programs, but we actually, if you are talking about the $45 million appropriation for independent living that is part of the Children's Bureau—you are not. But some of the shelters, such as Oasis House in Richmond, Virginia, do have independent living programs.

Mr. **Kildee**. Would it be helpful if we were to have some setaside if we increase the appropriation, of course, for independent living grants for your agency?

Ms. **Hinch**. Yes.

Mr. **Kildee**. OK. We will look into that. Because you do find a need for independent living programs, particularly among those whom we classify as homeless, and I know this is not always a clear definition between who is a runaway and who is homeless. At some point we can recognize that it is not possible for a child to go home because the family doesn't exist or the family is in a situation that it wouldn't be right for the child.

We need to do more in the independent living area. Perhaps that is something we can look at as we go through the reauthorization of this law. We certainly look forward to working with you on this. I think we share the same concern for children, and I have always viewed these hearings as that, not a competitive thing. Your cooperation this morning demonstrates that and we will be contacting you in the future. If you would supply for the record the information that Congressman Sawyer asked for, we would appreciate that and make it a part of the record.

[Information was not submitted.]

Ms. HINCH. Thank you very much.

Mr. KILDEE. Any further questions? Thank you very much for your testimony this morning.

Our second panel consists of Beverly Edmonds, Executive Director of Metro-Help, Chicago, Illinois, and James Walker, Chair, Board of Directors, National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Beverly, if you want to start off.

STATEMENTS OF BEVERLY EDMONDS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, METRO-HELP, CHICAGO, IL, AND JAMES H. WALKER, CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, NATIONAL NETWORK OF RUNAWAY AND YOUTH SERVICES, TULSA, OK

Ms. EDMONDS. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Beverly Edmonds and I am the Executive Director of Metro-Help, Inc, which holds the federal grant from the Department of Health and Human Services to be the National Runaway Switchboard.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify. I have submitted a statement and would like for it to be included in the record. I am prepared to summarize my statement at this time.

In 1974 after a number of cases of multiple abuse and murders of runaway youth came to light, the Runaway Youth Program was authorized by Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. Section 311 of the Act authorized the National Communications System for the purpose of assisting youth in communicating with their parents and with youth serving agencies.

An eight-month demonstration grant was awarded to Metro-Help and during that eight months, 11,000 calls were handled. So a decision was made to continue the service. Metro-Help applied for the grant along with several other agencies and in 1975 we became the National Runaway Switchboard.

The NRS is a toll-free telephone service for runaway youth across the country. It is extension crisis intervention and resource referral services and supplements these services with an additional function. It serves as a neutral aid in restoring channels of communication between runaways and their families through its message service and the ability to make three-party calls, conference calls between parents and children or shelters and children.

The NRS has reunited children with their families and when that is not possible, assured that children calling us have been linked to the referral best suited to their needs. This is a unique service. There are other national runaway switchboards not called by that name, but other national hot lines, but we are the only one that combines all of the forms of assistance, including crisis intervention, information and referral, conference calling, message delivery, training which is available to the public and a telephone teletypewriter for the deaf.

In 1965, the Department of Health and Human Services asked us to expand on services to include suicide prevention. We were concerned about that need, as well, and so we agreed to provide that service. We are now additionally called the Adolescent Suicide Hot Line and we answer about as many suicide-related calls as we do runaway calls.

We have seen the service become increasingly more critical. It is now believed that as many as two-thirds of the children in shelters are suicidal, much less the kids at home trying to decide whether to run away or kill themselves or the kids who are still on the streets. Suicide is second only to accidents in the most frequent cause of death in adolescents.

To our knowledge, we are the only national toll free number for adults or adolescents which does suicide prevention. In 1987 the Office of Civil Rights asked us also to include a telephone teletypewriter for the deaf and we do have that telephone teletypewriter and we will be in service with it within two months.

Recently, we have become aware of the fact that we are possibly the first or the only source for some of our callers on AIDS information, and so we are right now in the process of getting the training that we need to address that issue. Runaway youth are at double risk of AIDS because so many of them are involved in both prostitution and I.V. drug use.

We also see ourselves as an appropriate source of data on runaway youth. We collect information on all of our calls and we provide that information not only to this subcommittee, but to the media and other interested parties. We see ourselves, also, as not only being a crisis intervention and information and referral, but as a caring, non-judgmental problem-solving kind of service.

We teach the kids who call us how to do problem-solving. After 12 years of service, the National Runaway Switchboard has become one of the few stable resources kids on the streets can count on wherever they go. Someone who is willing to listen and provide a caring, calming influence to a child who feels unwanted and alone is often what makes the difference between that child's decision to die or to live.

I would like to tell you a little bit about what it is like to work a hot line, because if you have never done it before, it is very difficult to imagine what those calls are like. Imagine picking up the telephone and hearing on the other end of the line a 13-year-old girl calling, telling you that her father has been abusing her for the last two years and has been telling her that if she reports it, she will be the one who is arrested.

It turned out that when that call came in, the volunteer on the other end of the line was a lawyer and was able to say to her, "I can tell you that that is not true." I have a personal belief that the right volunteers are always on the end of the line for the right caller. I have seen that happen time and time again, and that was one of the cases.

Sometimes we get calls from runaways who are in medical emergencies. For instance, a girl who has been supporting herself as a prostitute and has been stabbed because someone wanted to be her pimp and she refused, she is calling us from a phone booth while she bleeds to death because she is tired of the struggle and she doesn't want to live any longer. She just wants someone to be there with her while she dies.

On the other hand, the call could be from someone like the man that we just worked with, the Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to get arrested because he had been calling for over a year, after having picked up young girls at truck stops. At least this is his story—picked them up in a truck stop and he called several toll free numbers, including ours, saying if we did not talk to him while he forced the little girl to fondle him, he would hurt her.

We were able to get that man arrested with cooperation of a couple of state police departments and the Center for Missing and Exploited Children. On the other hand, it could be a call from a child who has left home believing that his parents do not want him, but we have a message from his parents saying, "Please call home. We want you to come home." And when we are able to make him aware of that fact and conference call to the parents, he decides to go home, we are able to get him home.

Our volunteers are tremendously dedicated. You can imagine if they are answering calls like that how dedicated they must be. They answer calls from kids in the middle of nowhere who need to get to a shelter that is maybe 60 miles away. And what do we do? Kids who need long-term shelter because their parents don't want them. More and more suicidal kids, kids who call us again and again before they get their courage up to tell us their stories because it is so hard for them to trust. They have been so ill-used that they have to build up the capacity to trust before they are able to tell their story.

It takes tremendous, not only patience, courage, commitment and training, but creativity to find resources where there seems to be none. We have done things like call restaurants to get interpreters for callers speaking Vietnamese or Indian or French. We have called hospitals and churches in rural communities to take in kids where there is no shelter immediately available. We even coached a young girl to deliver her own baby because she was alone and in need of help.

Over and over, I am struck by the terrible loneliness that these kids feel. They have so many losses to deal with. They have lost their trust, their safety and security, sometimes their health. They have seen their friends die and they suspect that they are dying, too, from the drugs they used to anesthetize themselves enough to do the things that they have to do to survive. Or, from AIDS. It is a rare child who can come in from it after six months to a year and live anything like a normal or productive life.

After 12 years of being the National Runaway Switchboard, we have become one of the few stable resources for these children. It is a big responsibility, but it is one which the staff and volunteers and Board of Metro-Help are committed to fulfilling. We not only support reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency and Prevention Acts, especially the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, we applaud you of the subcommittee for the work you have done in behalf of these youth, and we thank you for the opportunity you have given us to work with you.

[The prepared statement of Beverly Edmonds follows:]

National
Runaway
Switchboard

Testimony
presented to the
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

by

Beverly Edmonds
Executive Director
National Runaway Switchboard

January 29, 1988

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TESTIMONY OF BEVERLY EDMONDS
NATIONAL RUNAWAY SWITCHBOARD

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, my name is Beverly Edmonds, and I am the Executive Director of Metro-Help, Inc. which holds the federal grant from the Department of Health and Human Services to be the National Runaway Switchboard. I have held this position for only six months, but I have worked in crisis intervention for fourteen years. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am eager to tell you about the ways in which we have been serving youth since 1975.

The National Runaway Switchboard began as a demonstration grant to Metro-Help, Inc. in 1974. Metro-Help is an agency in Chicago which was formed in 1971, to fill a need for comprehensive counseling and crisis intervention services devoted to at-risk youth in the Chicago area. A group of community-based agencies with expertise in the delivery of youth services envisioned one centralized organization with three elements:

- Round-the-clock *availability*. At its beginning, Metro-Help was the only youth services agency in the Chicago metropolitan area accessible to troubled youth any time night or day.
- *Expertise* in *all* youth-related issues. Metro-Help has the capacity to deal with the wide range of needs and problems experienced by at-risk youth. This capacity has made Metro-Help unique among the other existing youth services agencies.
- Capacity to act as a *clearinghouse* of information on existing services. Youth services did exist in 1971; however, they were underutilized because troubled youth either did not know of their existence and/or had not defined their problem clearly enough to know where to seek the solution. This was one of the critical gaps in effective youth services delivery in Chicago that Metro-Help was designed to overcome. Once the crisis is averted, the problem defined and solutions evaluated, Metro-Help has the resource base necessary to guide the caller to sources of concrete aid.

In order to fulfill this vision of increased effectiveness in the youth services delivery system, Metro-Help began its work through the Metro-Help Regional Switchboard in 1971. Through the hotline, all callers are connected with trained volunteers who assist them in defining their problem, assessing their options and choosing appropriate referrals if necessary.

In 1974, after a number of cases of multiple abuse and murders of runaway youth came to light, the Runaway Youth Program was authorized by Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. Section 311 of the Act authorized the National Communications System (NCS) for the purpose of assisting youth in communicating with their parents and with youth-serving agencies. An eight-month demonstration grant was awarded to Metro-Help. During that eight months, 11,000 calls were handled, and a decision was made to continue the service. Metro-Help applied for the grant along with several other agencies, and in 1975 we became the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS).

The NRS is a toll-free telephone service for runaway youth across the country. It extends the same crisis intervention and resource referral services as the Metro-Help Regional Switchboard, and supplements these services with an additional function: it serves as a neutral aid in restoring channels of communication between runaways and their families. Through its message service and ability to conference calls, the NRS has reunited children with their families and, when that is not possible, assured that the children calling us have been linked to the referral which is best suited to their needs.

The National Runaway Switchboard is unique in the United States. Although there are other national runaway telephone hotlines, the NRS is the only one which combines all the following forms of assistance: crisis intervention, information and referral services, conference calling, message delivery, training available to the public, and a telephone teletypewriter for the deaf. The National Runaway Switchboard continues to set the standards for other national hotlines.

In 1985, we were asked by the Department of Health and Human Services to expand our services to include suicide prevention. Since we knew of the urgent need for this type of hotline, we agreed, although no additional funding was available then, nor has it been made available in the last two years. We are now additionally the Adolescent Suicide Hotline and answer as many suicide related calls as runaway calls. We have seen this service become increasingly more critical. It is now believed that as many as two-thirds of the adolescents in shelters are suicidal, not to mention the kids on the streets or at home in abusive situations. Suicide is the second highest cause of death in adolescence. It is second only to accidents which are frequently disguised suicides. To our knowledge we are the only national toll-free suicide hotline for adolescents or adults.

In addition, in 1987, the Office of Civil Rights decided that we should provide a telephone teletypewriter for the deaf to serve hearing-impaired runaways and/or parents. After meeting with representative agencies for the hearing-impaired, we learned that there was indeed a need for this service, and that they were enthusiastic about our providing it and, in fact, would publicize the number for us. We obtained a TTY and began training on its use. We will be instituting this service as soon as we have determined the procedures, recruited enough volunteers to man the TTY and located the funding to pay for the anticipated increase in our telephone bill.

Over the years the nature of Metro-Help's assistance capabilities has evolved from a loosely structured hotline staffed by untrained, but concerned volunteers to a tightly focused youth service program staffed by extensively trained volunteers with the ability to access professional backup and a resource bank comprising over 7,000 shelters, medical facilities and other services nationwide. The credibility of our hotline is reflected in the fact that over 400,000 calls were placed to our hotline in 1987.

It is our future that I am most eager to tell you about. We keep discovering needs which we are uniquely suited to fill. Besides the Suicide Hotline and the TTY service, we are an important front line defense in the fight against AIDS. For some of our callers, we are frequently the first or only contact who could provide AIDS education and referrals. Runaway youth are at double risk of AIDS because so many of them are involved in both prostitution and IV drug use. It is imperative that we are fully trained to handle these calls, and we are in the process of obtaining that training.

Metro-Help is often used as a resource for others seeking to develop, revise or update services for at-risk youth. To facilitate the sharing of our information with other agencies or public officials interested in youth issues, Metro-Help established the national Agency Information and Referral Service hotline. In 1987 alone, we received over 300 inquiries from other organizations or public officials seeking information. Recently we, along with the Department of Health and Human Services, were instrumental in getting all the national adolescent hotline directors together in order to establish ways that all of us can work together.

We see ourselves as an appropriate source of data on runaways for this Subcommittee as well as all other interested parties. Data is collected on each call and used to analyze operational and programmatic needs. Metro-Help is therefore in a front-line position to identify trends in problems experienced by at-risk youth and to educate the public about youth issues. We are currently seeking funding to complete the computerization necessary to provide that data more accurately and in a more timely fashion.

To my knowledge we are the only national runaway hotline which routinely conferences calls between the referral given and the caller in order to determine the suitability of the referral and the ability of the caller to physically get to the referral. At the heart of our work is the belief that at-risk youth must confront, evaluate and ultimately make personal decisions. Because of this service and our commitment to a caring, nonjudgmental, problem-solving approach, our average call lasts longer than hotlines who see themselves as primarily referral services. Our commitment is to quality service, however, so we spend the time that is needed for each call. Suicide calls may run as long as five or six hours, but we consider saving a life to be worth whatever we have to do.

After twelve years of service, the National Runaway Switchboard has become one of the few stable resources that kids on the street can count on wherever they go. Someone who is willing to listen and provide a caring, calming influence to a child who feels unwanted and alone is often what makes the difference between that child's decision to die or to live.

With each added responsibility comes a need for more volunteers, more staff, more telephones, more training, more publicity and more funds. We are in the process of expanding to a goal of 250 active volunteers. With the ability to answer more calls comes an increase in expenses. Within two years we expect our telephone bill alone to be between $500,000 and $1,250,000. Our present federal grant is $350,000.

A hotline is a strange animal, not like anything else. Imagine picking up the telephone not knowing whether this call is going to be from a 13-year-old whose father is sexually abusing her and telling her that if she reports the abuse she will be the one to go to jail. Or maybe the call will be from a runaway girl who has been on the streets for two years, has just been stabbed by a man who wanted to be her pimp and rather than going to the hospital, she just wants someone to talk with while she bleeds to death because she is tired of the struggle. On the other hand the call could be from someone like the man we just worked with the Center for Missing and Exploited Children and several state police departments to locate so that he could be arrested. He had been calling 800 numbers for at least a year saying that he had a young girl with him, usually he had picked her up at a truck stop, and if we would not talk with him while he forced the little girl to fondle him, he would hurt her badly. Still again, maybe this call will be from a child who left home believing that his parents did not want him, and we are able to tell him that his mother has called and left a message for him and that she loves him and wants him home.

These are some of the kinds of calls that are answered by our volunteers every day. These people donate their time to take calls from kids considering running away, kids in the middle of nowhere who need to get to shelter or medical care, distraught parents, kids who need long-term shelter because their parents do not want them, more and more suicidal kids, and kids who call us again and again trying to decide whether they can trust us enough to tell us their story. They have been so ill-used and have been so long denied the safety and security we all need, that they test us repeatedly before taking the chance to tell us about their anger, their loss, their fear.

It takes tremendous patience, courage, commitment and training to handle calls like these. It also takes incredible creativity to find resources for callers where there seem to be none. We have called ethnic restaurants when we needed a Vietnamese or Indian or French interpreter. We have called hospitals and churches to shelter a child overnight who is 60 miles from the nearest official shelter. We even coached a young girl through the delivery of her baby — over the phone.

Over and over I am struck by the terrible loneliness these kids feel. They have so many losses to deal with. They have lost their trust, their safety and security, sometimes their health. They have seen their friends die and suspect that they are dying, too, from the drugs they use to anesthetize themselves enough to do the things they have to do to survive. Even without the threat of AIDS, they know that they have lost their futures. It is a rare child who can come in from the streets after six months to a year and live anything like a normal, productive life.

After twelve years of being the National Runaway Switchboard, we have become one of the few stable resources in these children's lives. It is a big responsibility. One which the staff, volunteers and board of Metro-Help are absolutely committed to fulfilling.

We not only support reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, especially the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, we applaud you of the Subcommittee for the work you have done in behalf of these youth and thank you for the opportunity you have afforded us to join in that work.

Mr. **Kildee**. Thank you very much.

Mr. **Walker**. Thank you. I am James M. Walker, and I am Director of the National Resource Center for Youth Services with the University of Oklahoma and here representing the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services as their Chairman. I would like to thank you, Congressman Kildee, and members of this committee, for the opportunity to come before this group and to discuss this very real issue and important concern in our country today.

I would also like to commend this committee for also scheduling Mike Montoya as a witness this morning and your regular use of youth in your hearings, and this is an excellent example of youth involvement, which is very strongly supported by the National Network.

Currently, on our national board of 17, four are young people who have taken a very active and leadership role within our organization to help us remain on target, and your work here and your dedication to youth involvement is a very good example that we hope other committees will follow.

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services is an organization of community based youth serving agencies. It has approximately 1,000 affiliate or direct members across the country representing every state. They provide shelter, counseling, educating, youth employment, training and crisis intervention.

These agencies also provide referrals to health, mental health, legal and other social services within the community. Historically, these agencies have served as a community catalyst to advocate for more and better services and opportunities for the young people in their communities.

This dual role of both direct services and acting as a community change agent has been a key to the runaway and service programs being accepted by local communities at large.

The membership of the national network unanimously supports a continuation and expansion of funding of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. Since its inception, it has been successful in the provision of crisis and shelter services. Through its grantees, it has been successful in involving legal communities and state agencies to focus on the needs of these very vulnerable young people identified as runaway and homeless youth.

Of the members responding to a recent national network survey which the total was 150 agencies, of the 150, 86 were currently Runaway Youth Act grantees, but of those receiving RHWA funding, that funding equaled 34 percent of their total funding of each of their programs. So by far, it is not the total support for the local agencies.

In the same survey, the agencies that were receiving United Way Funding equaled 27 percent of the total funding of each individual agency. The rest of the money comes from cities, counties, states and I am very proud of the fact that in the State of Oklahoma, my home state, that although there are only seven Runaway Youth Act funded shelters in the State of Oklahoma, there are a total of 31 programs operating in the state with state funding totaling 7.5 million for these programs in the state appropriation.

Other states also have become involved in this. Some of them are Texas, Florida, Michigan, Wisconsin, that are combining with this federal funding to reach out to provide more and more comprehensive services. An issue of great concern to the network membership at this time, though, is the funding pattern that has already been discussed here this morning.

That is with a relatively stable funding base, the funding of more and more basic center grants, which is reducing the amount of funding for those shelters or, as you have already pointed out in some years, some shelters get money and in next year's other shelters do.

We do support the competitive process, but we also support the multiyear funding that has been implemented, and would like for you to be cognizant of the fact that there is this federal money that has been a very good tool for local communities to raise the support of both state and local and private entities to fund these programs. And there is a real balance, and if the federal money goes and comes, it makes it very difficult for these agencies to retain all their other funding, as well.

Not only is there a great deal of local funding support, there—these programs, as Ms. Hinch, testified, are very innovative and creative in how they are able to keep their allegations going. Another piece of information that came from our recent survey is that out of 150 agencies that responded, that represented 36 states, at any one time there are 1,165 volunteers on any given day, that many volunteers involved in the programs, which is one reason they are able to operate on such an inefficient amount of money.

With the total number of volunteer hours equaling 346,298, this merely 150 agencies responded out of the 800 to 1,000 programs providing runaway and youth services across the country. So you can multiply those figures by a great deal.

Mr. **Walker**. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act continues to influence service delivery and program standards across the country, even with agencies that do not receive this money. In many cases States have developed funding as the base line on which to operate. The National Resource Center for Youth Services is currently publishing a new manual for shelters, and once again we have relied very heavily on the standards from this act to set a criteria of operation for these programs.

The survey that I have already spoken of also indicates a significant increase in youth identified as having been sexually and physically abused by a parent, this has come to 51 percent in this survey, and another 10 percent by other family members that have been abused either sexually or physically. This totaled 61 percent for this particular survey.

What we are finding is the young people coming to the shelters have a lot more problems than in the past. Many of the shelters in the very early days of funding were serving the role almost of a safe house, of young people traveling that did not seem to have quite the problems that they have today. At this point they are operating as short-term crises prevention facilities. Fifty-nine percent of the youth we reported as having school problems, such as being truant, suspended, expelled or having dropped out.

The young people that are coming to the shelters at this point are multiple-problem, long-term situations in which the shelters are needing to be much better trained and a much higher quality of staff.

Another issue that is most difficult and most challenging for us to deal with is the issue of youth homelessness. We have trouble identifying the number of youth that are actually homeless and not just considered "runaway" because the studies that have been done on homelessness have rarely included much information on homeless youth. One, homeless programs across the country generally will not accept teenagers, especially teenage boys, because of the problems that they feel arise from mixing the teenagers with the older populations.

When the surveyors have gone past going to the shelters and have gone to the hangouts where homeless people congregate, once again they have missed the number of homeless youth because those hangouts or places where they gather generally are also not frequented by youth, and the youth are somewhere else. So we are continuing to have a problem in needing to know even the number of homeless youth and also looking for creative programs to deal with those.

There are several around the country that work with this in their local communities. We encourage the funding of transitional living projects that will provide shelter and services to the homeless youth of America. Street kids face incredible dangers in their every-day existence, ranging from AIDS to drugs to alcohol dependency, and we must develop methods to protect them.

Program findings have shown that youth are very willing to leave the street, that they are looking for a way out, that they are not there because they necessarily want to be, and yet we must develop very creative answers to problems that can meet the kids where they are and work with them to bring them back to be productive.

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services encourages the continuation and increase of funding for the Runaway Homeless Youth Act. We also support that the majority of this money should go for the basic center grants. They are the key to the services being provided. But, as I talked to that, the type of young people coming to the shelter has changed dramatically. We must continue to have creative programming being developed to reach out to other populations and to serve the more difficult youth.

The Network supports adequate funding of the regional coordinated networks and the discretionary grant programs. Our emphasis is the basic centers, but we are asking for an adequate funding in the other areas as well. Although the task is a very difficult one, with your continued interest and support our nation's very professional and dedicated youth services providers can continue to strive for successful solutions for troubled youths.

I would like to close with a quote from Julian Borg, Director of the Nashville Youth Network, and a youth representative on our National Board. Julian stated at the Statewide Conference in Oklahoma City: "However complex the cultural lag from our increasing technology, however tragic our divorce rates, however overwhelming our national deficit, we cannot afford to systematically force children to bear the brunt of these larger societal problems. The resources of our nation are surely sufficient that we do not need to triage our youth and throw away those victims of violence who need us the most. We do not lack the know-how or the money to care for these young people—we only lack the will to get on with the task."

I appreciated each of your comments this morning about your support and willingness to continue to work toward this endeavor of serving this very vulnerable population.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of James M. Walker follows:]

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

by

James M. Walker, Chair
The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, Inc.

I am James M. Walker, Director of the National Resource Center for Youth Services at the University of Oklahoma in Tulsa, Oklahoma, here representing the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, Inc. as their Chairperson. I would like to thank Congressman Kildee and the members of the Subcommittee on Human Resources for inviting me to discuss the Runaway Youth Act and our efforts to serve our nation's population of runaway and homeless youth. I would also like to commend this committee for encouraging the involvement of young people such as Mike Montoya in this hearing process. The National Network strongly supports youth participation and demonstrates our commitment to the concept by having youth on our Board of Directors. Currently, young people hold four of seventeen seats and have taken a real leadership role within our organization.

I would like to quote one of our youth representatives, Julian Borg, of Nashville, Tennessee, from a speech he made at a statewide conference in Oklahoma City in December, 1987:

> "Youth participation is simply another means of complementing the efforts of those serving youth. Youth services are vital but at present are not the best they could be. Youth need to be involved directly in policies and programs which affect them. They need to join in the process of creating, implementing, and establishing decisions which directly or indirectly affect youth life style, education, or legal rights. Who better can identify with and understand the problems of youth than another youth? Youth participation is meaningful involvement of young people in those organizations, and institutions, that affect their lives. It is an avenue for the unique youth perspective to be shared, considered, and utilized. It is an effective way to insure that a youth policy will work."

Your regular involvement of youth in hearings is an excellent example for other committees to follow.

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services is an organization of community based youth serving agencies. It represents approximately 1,000 affiliate and direct member agencies in every state providing services of shelter, counseling, education, youth employment training, and crisis intervention. These agencies also provide referrals to health, mental health, legal and other social services within the community. Historically, these agencies have served as a community catalyst to advocate for more and better services and opportunities for its young people. This dual role of both direct service provider and community change agent has been a key to runaway and youth service programs being accepted by the local community at large.

The membership of the National Network unanimously supports the continuation and expansion of funding of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. Since its inception, it has been successful in the provision of crisis and shelter services. Through its grantees it has also been successful involving local communities and state agencies to focus on the needs of these very vulnerable young people identified as runaway and homeless youth.

Of the members responding to a recent Network survey, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act provides approximately 34% of the funding for programs who receive RHYA grants. This money leverages additional funds to provide or expand these services. The survey also indicated that for those agencies receiving United Way funding, it accounted for approximately 27% of their total budgets. I am very proud that in my home state of Oklahoma, there are seven RYHA funded programs but a total of thirty-eight agencies operating on a state appropriation of $7.5 million plus additional United Way, city, county and private funding. This combination of funding has been a key in the ability of the Oklahoma Association of Youth Services to have shelter and crisis services available to over 90% of the state population.

An issue of great concern among the Network membership is a funding pattern that has developed over the past few years to fund a larger number of basic center grants without substantial increases in the total funding amount. This has meant decreases in funding to most shelters and significant decreases to many. Although we support the need for expanded development of new programs and a competitive grant process, successful, established community programs should be protected from damaging, and sometimes fatal budget reductions. The balance of multi-funding bases is a delicate balance and requires careful scrutiny before successfully altering it. The base funding provided by this act can be the key to leveraging the local public and private dollars that facilitate quality services.

Not only are there other direct financial resources supporting the community-based youth service providers, our survey indicated that the 150 respondents representing 38 states have an estimated 1,165 volunteers at "one time" with a total 346,298 volunteer hours contributed. At a minimal rate of five dollars per hour, that contribution for those 150 programs equals $1,731,490. These programs also reported in-kind contributions of $1,083,200.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act continues to influence service delivery and program standards even when local programs are not directly receiving this funding. States that have established funding for runaway youth services such as Texas and Florida have modeled their guidelines and standards after RHYA. The National Resource Center is currently publishing a shelter resource manual that relies heavily on the RHYA standards.

There is absolutely no doubt that the need for services for runaway and homeless youth continues to grow. With an estimated one to one and one-half million runaways, there are just not enough beds available whether you look at the major metropolitan, suburban or rural areas. Our preliminary survey of 150 agencies show the number of youth served:

	FY86	FY87
A) on a residential basis	31,047	30,510
B) on a non-residential basis	30,742	35,457
C) on a one-time contact basis	42,945	58,283
D) on a telephone contact basis	79,211	88,804

The reduction in the number of youth sheltered could be caused by several factors. Two of the most probable are the reduction in individual RHYA grants or the difficulty in working with the more difficult multi-problem youth. The centers responding to the survey reported that 3,854 youth were denied shelter admission because they were deemed as inappropriate (usually too disturbed) and another 3,352 were turned away due to no available beds.

The survey indicates a significant increase in youth identified as having been sexually or physically abused by a parent (51%) and sexually or physically abused by other family members (10%). This total of 61% far exceeds our 1985 survey which indicated a rate of approximately 18%. We believe that one of the reasons for this large increase in identified cases is due to the discretionary funding of adolescent abuse programs that have further educated the runaway shelters on this issue. Fifty-nine percent of the youth were reported as having school problems such as being truant, suspended, expelled or having dropped out.

The issue of homeless youth remains one of our most challenging problems. We must be able to develop innovative services to reach these disaffected youth on whom we have so little data. Studies done on the homeless rarely include information on homeless teens because they generally cannot receive services at adult homeless shelters nor do they congregate in the same locations with homeless adults. We encourage the funding of transitional living projects that will provide shelter and services to the homeless youth of America. Street kids face incredible dangers in their every day existence, ranging from AIDS to drug and alcohol dependency, and we must develop methods to protect them. Program findings show strong indications that youth will make very serious and repeated efforts to leave the streets. Quoting our Executive Director, "Young people turning away from the streets must develop trust in someone who meets them where they are and does not confront them with judgmental and rejecting opinions about their life. There must be innovative programmatic efforts to reach out to these young people."

The funding and operation of these community-based youth service programs have also assisted in relieving the pressure caused by the deinstitutionalization of status offenders by the juvenile justice system. The runaway centers have provided positive alternatives for referral for young people who have been diverted from the more traditional juvenile justice system.

Since the initial funding of runaway shelters, there have been significant changes in the variety and quality of services being provided. As has already been stated, the problems facing the youth entering a runaway center today are much more complex than what they appeared to be a few years ago. Shelter staff must be much more sophisticated and better trained to be able to adequately cope with these young people. Communities are becoming more aware of the problems facing our teens and are looking to their community youth service agency to respond to the identified needs. In many cases the pilot projects to test/ demonstrate new concepts have been funded through discretionary grants. Very often, these innovative concepts are being picked up through local funding sources and are being replicated across the country. This limited source of funding for creative, and in many cases, unproven projects have assisted programs to remain on the cutting edge of service delivery.

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services encourages the continuation of funding for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act with the majority of the funding for operations of basic center grants. We also support adequate funding of the regional coordinated networks and the discretionary grants program. Although the task is a very difficult one, with your continued interest, concern and support, our nation's very professional and dedicated youth service providers can continue to strive for successful solutions for our troubled youth. To quote Julian Borg once again, "However complex the cultural lag from our increasing technology,n however tragic our divorce rates, however overwhelming our national deficit, we cannot afford to systematically force children to bear the brunt of these larger societal problems. The resources of our nation are surely sufficient that we do not need to triage our youth and throw away those victims of violence who need us the most. We do not lack the know how or the money to care for these young people-- we only lack the will to get on with the task." I believe that the American people are more than willing to do whatever is necessary to literally save the young people currently being lost due to lack of adequate allocation of our nation's resources to meet their needs.

Mr. **Kildee**. Thank you very much, Mr. Walker.

Ms. Edmonds, has the National Runaway Switchboard adequately been able to handle the number of incoming calls? Are there peak times of the day or year, do you have any statistics as to how many times a person may call, a young person may call, and find a busy signal? Have you done any research on that?

Ms. **Edmonds**. First let me tell you I have only been director for six months, so I am going to be telling you some things I am in the process of changing once I become aware of the situation.

Peak times are after report cards come out. That has been our discovery. It is not around Christmas, it is not necessarily summer; it is report card times, and our phones are busiest in the evening hours, like after four o'clock. The busy signal rate is alarming to me and to all of us at Metro-Help. We have been taking steps in the last few months to really reduce that.

Let me tell you some of the things we are doing. First, we are really building up our volunteer corps. We are aiming for 250 volunteers, and we have an agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services on a plan on how we are doing that. We have recruited 60 volunteers in the last two months. We believe the volunteers are there in Chicago, it is just a matter of going out and getting them, and we have been pretty successful so far in doing that. As we get more volunteers and we are able to answer more calls, the problem with that is that our phone bill comes up dramatically, so we are also in the process of writing grants and looking for funding in order to pay for the phone bill to answer the additional calls.

We just put in additional telephone lines, but not equipment yet. We are still looking for the funding for that equipment to be there for the new volunteers coming in, to have more people on at one time to answer more calls.

We also are in the process of finishing our computerization, getting the rest of the hardware and programming so we can give you better statistics on the number of calls that we do answer. Right now the statistics that I have don't jibe with what AT&T tells us, so I really don't have a good idea to be able to tell you how many we are actually answering. I can tell you, from what the telephone company gives us, about 400,000 calls are placed to us each year. That is a lot of calls, and that is going to take an enormous budget to be able to pay for it. The phone bill is going to cost us between $2 and $5 a call, and we are trying to figure out how much that——

Mr. **Kildee**. The budget is $350,000?

Ms. **Edmonds**. We get $350,000 from the government, and our budget is $400,000.

Mr. **Kildee**. I asked the question about the busy signal, because having taught school for many years in an inner-city school, we had a real cross-section of Flint, Michigan, in that school, I often saw young people frustrated because their parents were too busy, and I am just wondering what their reaction is when they call for help, and they get a busy signal again. It may be the system is too busy for them, and it can be frustrating. Maybe they won't call the second time. I am concerned about the parents, or someone else, being too busy to listen to them.

Ms. **Edmonds.** We are concerned about that too, and we are moving as quickly as we can to get the time it takes to get through to us cut dramatically. One problem is we don't want to compromise the quality of service especially because we are the adolescent suicide hotline now. There is no way I want to put a limit on the time we put on calls. A suicide call could take a volunteer five to six hours sometimes on one particular call, and I don't want them to feel like they have to get off the phone and possibly take chances with someone's life just so we have more——

Mr. **Kildee.** If your budget were increased, could you both improve the technical quality of your equipment and perhaps have a better outreach program for volunteers to come into the program?

Ms. **Edmonds.** Exactly, yes. I think what we have been doing, we have done the best we could do with the existing resources, and we have made the decision we just simply must get more resources in order to be able to handle this volume.

Mr. **Kildee.** I know there are a lot of people out there of every age, a lot of retired people, who have experience as grandparents and parents who often even are looking for something worthwhile to do, and perhaps an outreach program would give you money to reach out into the community, let them know what the need may be, increase your number of volunteers. Couple that with upgraded equipment and perhaps you could respond to the needs of more young people.

Ms. **Edmonds.** Yes. Partly it has been a need for more staff as well, not only to produce the kinds of materials we need to go out and do the outreach, which costs money, but the more people we have on the phones at one time, the more likelihood there is if there is a serious call coming in, they need supervision or help, to trace the call or that sort of thing. So I need more staff people to be there 24 hours with the volunteers. Obviously, every increase in the number of calls increases the need for space, need for equipment, need for staff, need for materials, everything.

Mr. **Kildee.** I think your program fills a very important need, so we will certainly look at this and see what we can do. I personally feel this is a high priority, and we will compete in the budget process with other areas. We will compete with sunflower subsidies. I think kids can compete very well with sunflower subsidies.

Ms. **Edmonds.** I appreciate that, Mr. Chairman. I am very excited about the things we do, especially in preventing kids from not only just killing themselves but from running away or doing other things that might be harmful to themselves. So I appreciate hearing that you consider us a high priority.

Mr. **Kildee.** Mr. Walker, from time to time I and my three teenagers go out to a place in Alexandria called Christ House where at 6:00 o'clock every evening they feed the homeless. I have noted an increasing number of young people coming there for help.

What type of commitment is needed to address the needs of the homeless child? Can an agency provide a shelter, short-term type shelter for the runaway and also have as one of its services, maybe elsewhere, some means of independent living for those who are homeless?

Mr. **Walker.** Yes, definitely. There are programs around the country that are providing services to the homeless. Many of these kids that are homeless have been part of the system, have received services in the past and are very cautious about getting caught back up into the system where they feel they have absolutely no control. Some examples of some excellent programs that are run by shelter operations and other youth services is The Bridge in Boston operates a homeless program where kids can come in, get a meal and visit with the counselor. They also have free dental clinics in the evening with volunteer dentists, where kids can have their teeth worked on. They also have a medical van that goes throughout the community, goes to the kids, where the kids are living, and provides medical services at night so that kids who need to have some medical or dental help can get some services.

The Los Angeles Network is doing a multi-agency thing of providing food, medical services and counseling, and trying to provide long-term stabilization of these youth where they can move back in to living in a what we consider normal environment.

The Street Works in Bridgeport, Connecticut, serves about 450 homeless kids a year and are providing services once again to help focus them and move them back into society.

There are a variety of programs. Again, it takes a slightly different approach, many cases of going to them rather than expecting them to come in. Again, as we deal with the homeless population we need to also protect the funding and the programmatic phase for the runaway shelters.

Mr. **Kildee**. Thank you very much. Mr. Tauke.

Mr. **Tauke**. Ms. Edmonds, I want to congratulate you for the outstanding work you do. It just appears as if the program that you operate is one of the most successful and worthwhile programs that we have to deal with the problems that we are discussing this morning, and I really appreciate what you are doing.

Ms. **Edmonds**. Thank you.

Mr. **Tauke**. Can you tell me what the relationship is between the runaway switchboard and the Missing Childrens' Toll-Free Hotline, if there is any relationship?

Ms. **Edmonds**. No formal relationship, but we do work well together. In fact, in December, DHHS invited all the national hotline directors to get together to find ways we could work together, and that was the first time I had met the director of the Missing Childrens' Line. And shortly after, we were able to work together on being able to find that particular caller I mentioned in my statement, and he has some procedures for being able to trace calls throughout the United States, which we have not been able to do, and has worked with us on being able to find that in Chicago, to be able to do that as well. So we just have a very good working relationship.

Mr. **Tauke**. How many hot lines are there nationally when all of you got together, the directors? How many were there?

Ms. **Edmonds**. There was a Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Covenant House, Hit Home, from San Diego, and there is another one in Texas called Runaway Hotline, but they were not present.

Mr. **Tauke**. So there are four or five.

Ms. **Edmonds**. Except the Center for Missing and Exploited Children is a different thing, so really there are four runaway hotlines.

Mr. **Tauke**. Do you have a practice of referring calls from one hotline to another?

Ms. **Edmonds**. Yes, we do. We refer several calls to the Center for Missing and Exploited Children. We would really not have a reason to refer them to one of the other hotlines.

Mr. **Tauke**. Mr. Walker, there seems to be some kind of relatively clear difference between the services needed by runaway youths versus those needed by homeless youth, where we kind of lump them together in the current Act. Do you think we should try to differentiate between the two in the reauthorization of the Act?

Mr. **Walker**. That is a very difficult question. The type of programs providing the runaway services, I feel, are probably the most capable or able to deal also with the homeless population. These agencies have been, have developed a track record of working with kids. Of this recent network survey, 20 percent of the kids coming to the programs were self-referrals, and, again, as I said, this is what we are looking for with the homeless population. It is them being willing to interact with an agency that they feel they can trust and won't get caught up in.

So I think it is a good match. Whether we are using the term "runaway" or "homeless" more or less gets into a time line of how long they are gone in many cases rather than just runaways have left the happy home and can always return. So I think that it can work together in the same bill. We need to find more resources and creative ways to deal with the two populations.

Mr. **Tauke**. From your experience, do the networks and individual centers utilize the National Resource Center for Youth Services?

Mr. **Walker**. Yes. We have a very close working relationship with the national network, with the regional coordinated networks and the local programs. We began our operation—we are in our early part of our third year of operations as a resource center, and the staff had basically come out of the runaway system. So we started with very strong contacts there and are continuing to look for ways to make linkages and disseminate information.

Mr. **Tauke**. Is the Resource Center the best way to disseminate information?

Mr. **Walker**. I am somewhat biased on that point. Yes. Again, when you start a national project from ground zero to develop, it takes some time. But we are finding that we are—we feel we are doing a good job, where we are at this point, in gathering creative information on programs and helping to disseminate it, and we are doing that both directly and then through linkages with the regional coordinated networks and the national network, so we feel we are really linked in and agencies are aware of our existence and ability to provide information.

Mr. **Tauke**. You expressed some concern in your testimony about the dissolution to the shelters, and I gather, you suggest we not only have more money but perhaps we should have some kind of minimum grant level for the shelters. Did I interpret that remark correctly?

Mr. **Walker**. That would be helpful. How do you give a certain amount and continue to expand the number of shelters? There only seems to be one answer, and that is more money. There is a need for more shelters throughout the country. The capacity of the shelters is in most cases running at full force and above most of the time. But because of this balance of funding, many times the Federal money is used to leverage other money, and if 20 to 30 percent of an agency's budget is gone or reduced significantly, it causes traumatic problems on an agency that may be operating from five or six funding sources already.

So, yes, a funding base would be wonderful.

Mr. **Tauke**. There are some who argue that the more shelters you have, the more shelters you will need. In other words, it makes opportunities more available to young people, and so, therefore, they will use the facilities. Do you think there is any merit at all to that kind of argument?

Mr. **Walker**. I don't find anything wrong with us providing beds for young people that need them rather than them sleeping on the streets.

Mr. **Tauke**. Well, that doesn't really address the argument. The argument is that in a certain community, let's say if beds are readily available, more young people will choose to take advantage of that option and leave home if things get troublesome with the parents. Do you think there is any basis——

Mr. **Walker**. The huge majority of young people going to shelter programs return home or return to a relative or another stable home environment. It is not once they have gone to the shelter they are then lost from the family. The emphasis of these agencies is to maintain that family connection and to work with them in the crisis situation to re-unite the family, so by having more shelters, it does allow the kids to go to a place that is safe or safe places, one of the projects that has been talked about, and more quickly return home rather than the youth going through the trauma of being on the streets or without the counseling services and then having more difficulty re-entering the home environment.

So the more shelters, the more quickly that they can return to the home.

Mr. **Tauke**. Your indirect answers to the question almost make me believe there is some merit to the argument. Generally we don't hear that much from witnesses that come before the subcommittee, but you don't have to talk to too many people out there in the street to hear the arguments. They say if we create another hundred beds in Des Moines, Iowa there is going to be more kids when they get their report cards who are going to say, "It is such a problem at home, I will spend a couple nights at the shelter", and, therefore, the youth will create a demand to fill whatever shelters are available. I, in the past, have dismissed it as an entirely fallacious argument, but is there some merit to it?

Mr. **Walker**. No, I don't believe so at all. There is a large number of young people turned away from shelters at this time due to the fact there is no space for them that are already looking for beds, and that is the reason for the answers I have given before. Again, the shelters are not looking to bring more kids in, and in the intake procedure generally we will identify if there is a true need for shelter or not. In many cases, with youth coming to a shelter or calling a shelter, it immediately calls in the parents and it is resolved at that point. I would say there are very few youth in America there for a night or two because of report cards.

Mr. **Tauke**. The last question for either one of you is: is there any kind of coordination between the services you provide and school districts across the nation? Do you hear much from school officials? Do you have any kind of working relationship with them either in communicating information about what services you offer or working with them to help them do what they can to prevent problems?

Mr. **Walker**. One of the strongest points about these programs is that they are community based, and, as I have already stated, they are multiple-funded. I would say that the huge majority of the programs across the country are working directly with their schools. There are a variety of school outreach programs dealing with dropout prevention where the schools make direct referrals, and there are working relationships and in many instances working agreements between the school systems and local programs to assist them in retaining kids in school and dealing with problem situations.

So, yes, there is a great deal of communications between school districts and local shelter and youth service programs.

Mr. **Tauke**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. **Kildee**. Mr. Sawyer.

Mr. **Sawyer**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Edmonds, when you go about the business of recruiting folks to help, I assume from what you said that you look for people whose backgrounds are compatible with the needs that you face. When Mr. Walker mentioned the need for training you nodded, and you talked about the kind of assistance and supervision that sometimes is necessary in the course of a particular call. How much formalized training are you able to bring up front? Where do you get it? Does it need to be supplemented, and how much goes on just after they have begun to work?

Ms. **Edmonds**. I am very proud of our training, so I am delighted you asked me about this.

We have 40 hours of formal training before the volunteer ever gets on the lines, and that training is in areas like crisis intervention and runaways, adolescence, suicide prevention, substance abuse, incest and rape, very heavy into listening skills—those are most of the areas.

Now, I have been a trainer all over the United States, I used to have a company where I provided training for people like IBM, Data Point, Taco Bell, and all sorts of different people, and I do a lot of training, but then I bring in experts from the community to talk about their areas of expertise, like substance abuse, incest and rape, suicide, those particular areas.

After the volunteers—oh, and the training is only one-third didactic, it is two-thirds practical in small groups, so they get a lot of practice before they ever get on the lines.

After that 40 hours of training, they don't just get onto the lines, they have a period of time where they listen in to calls and where they are only on the phone being supervised and our supervisors can listen to the calls, so they are closely supervised and screened before we allow them on the lines.

Now, one way I have been able to recruit more volunteers is by opening the training to anyone. We feel like the training is a community service and the more people we can turn out with these kinds of skills, the better for the community. But it has been interesting that in each case when it has come down to the time to say, all right, how many of you are going to go on and be volunteers and how many want to stop now? Not one person has wanted to stop to this point. So, that has really increased the number of people who have come into the training, and after they have gone through their initial period of training, we provide in-services as frequently as we feel are needed or as we can.

Now, I have only been there six months, but we are looking for in-services at least about once a month. We are also going back and re-evaluating all of the volunteers who were trained before I got there to find out whether they are up to the standards that I set and whether they need some additional training.

Mr. **Sawyer.** Thank you. It sounds like a marvelous program. It leads me directly to the question I wanted to ask Mr. Walker. I really buy into the idea that you shared about the importance of the kind of funding we provide being used to leverage State and local assistance. Certainly the kind of community participation that Ms. Edmonds described is enormously important in that. When you were talking about the competitive process and the multi-year character of funding, it struck me, whether or not in that competition for subsequent funding, it might not be wise to build in a weaning process, that is, a process by which one—not an elimination funding but one of the measures of competitiveness for funding would be the capacity to reach out into a community, develop community support, both in terms of effort, in terms of money, so that we are really providing an incentive to do what we would all agree is important.

Mr. **Walker.** The funding currently from the recent survey is providing 34 percent of the funding. With the programs that I am aware of in Oklahoma which are receiving funding, it comes closer to 10 to 20 percent. To me, that is a pretty good weaning. Weaning much past that, you get into elimination of support. These programs are doing an excellent job of seeking out other sources of funding, of dealing with the private sector, the corporate sector, the United Ways, as well as State agencies.

One of the issues, as the amount of money has been reduced, is that for programs to remain open, shelters have begun to—not have to, but chose to take on other responsibilities. As an example, as the runaway youth monies goes down, they may begin to contract a number of beds in the shelter for use by State agencies, which reduces the flexibility and the ability to serve possibly all the runaways coming to the program. So there is already, as in the last few years, as the funding has fluctuated, agencies have had to choose in some cases whether to close or to change their services, and in some cases again away from the runaway youth to a different type population.

So although it is happening, and I think it is probably one of the best examples in the country of finding local support for social services, there is a loss as this money decreases.

Mr. Sawyer. Let me ask did I hear you say you don't believe it would be wise to build that sort of thing in, or that it would be difficult, or that it is happening anyway and so it ought perhaps just to be allowed to happen?

Mr. Walker. Yes. It would be difficult. I don't know that it would be wise, and I think that if there could be a stable funding base of these programs where then they were able to go from that point, as they have identified other needs of youth expanding their programs—but it is a juggling act, and these agencies spend a great deal of time trying to keep the doors open and providing adequate and quality services that to then add a weaning or reduction process into it I don't think would be productive.

Mr. Sawyer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kildee. As a corollary to that, I do know there are agencies who don't apply for the Federal funds because if they apply, another agency will lose its Federal funding. It is a really difficult choice.

I think one of the ways we could solve the problems all of us are concerned with here is to raise both the authorization level and the appropriations level, then maybe we could fine-tune some of these things. I think all three of us have shown our concern because we recognize that shelters are faced with some very difficult choices. We will look at the prospects of increasing the authorization and working through the budget process to see if we can get an increased appropriation.

We really appreciate your testimony this morning, and we look forward to continuing to work with both of you as we go through this reauthorization. It is a very important bill. We will be in contact with you. Thank you very much.

STATEMENTS OF DEBORAH SHORE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SASHA BRUCE YOUTHWORK; HIDA AVENT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STEPPING STONE; CAROL THOMAS-SMEDES, VICE PRESIDENT, MICHIGAN NETWORK OF RUNAWAY AND YOUTH SERVICES; AND MIKE MONTOYA, A STEP FORWARD, THE SANCTUARY

Mr. Kildee. Our third panel will consist of Deborah Shore, Executive Director, Sasha Bruce Youthwork; Hida Avent, Executive Director, Stepping Stone; Carol Thomas-Smedes, Vice President, Michigan network of Runaway and Youth Services; and Mike Montoya, A Step Forward, The Sanctuary.

Deborah, do you wish to start?

Ms. Shore. Chairman Kildee and members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to join you this morning. I am delighted to voice my support of the reauthorization of Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.

This morning, in addition to informing you of the ways the Act makes a difference for youths and families in crisis, I hope to challenge you to become advocates for this population. Your thoughtful consideration and active support of programs for families in need of help truly strengthens our society and serves as an investment in the future. Helping troubled families and runaway children today prevents delinquency, homelessness and increased strains on our society tomorrow.

I founded Sasha Bruce Youthwork (SBY) in 1974 and have been serving runaway and homeless youth and their families ever since. This morning I would like to describe to you the four populations of young people that require assistance and discuss how the act does or does not serve these young people.

The four populations I think break down first into the group of troubled young people who have resolvable family problems. This represents about 75 percent of the young people that we see, and they are greatly aided by the kinds of services we are able to provide through the act. We believe and I think can show our approach of working with families really helps to stabilize the young person and move them back into their communities successfully. In fact, in our program 95 percent of the young people who run away from home are able to successfully go back into a stable living situation. For this population we address the needs of these families and encourage the provisions of comprehensive family services. That is the good news.

The bad news is the need is far greater than the services we have to offer. The basic center grant funding, I think, is targeted quite appropriately and is a truly effective means, but we are in the position even those families where the problems are resolvable and we know quite well what to do, we are not in a position to serve all of them. In fact, in the District we had a task force that looked at the problem specifically for our population and found that there were at least, at minimum, and this is what everybody would agree to, at minimum 2,000 young people that were not being touched by any services who were known to be runaways. They had missing persons reports, they were away from home.

I strongly believe, and I know this is a reauthorization hearing, and I am not as knowledgeable about the distinctions perhaps, that the grants for the basic centers and this program in general have a strong basis to argue for a great increase. We are doing a tremendous amount of work with a very small amount of funding overall, and it is a very successful amount of work that we are doing. I think that the allocation needs to be increased totally, which will I think allow for the allocations to individual programs and to States to also be dramatically increased. If there is a drop-off of a third in California, the States that perhaps don't have the resources or sophistication to encourage grantees, there has to be at least that much. If we had two-thirds more funding, think of the things we could do. We certainly in the District could probably reach 2,000 additional children a year.

The second population that I think that we serve is young people who are essentially homeless. These are young persons a lot less visible than the adult persons who sleep on the streets. We don't see them in the food lines or shelters, but they are there.

There are many very successful programs around the country that are providing services to these young people and helping them to make the transition to independent living. However, in order for those services to work, they are culling a group of young people who have the motivation, skills and resources to move to independent living. Not all 16-year-olds are ready for that, and yet we have a tremendous population of 16-, 17- and 18-year-olds too who are not ready for independent living but also don't have families, and that brings me to the third population.

The third population are young people that we see who have—who do not have resolvable family problems or in most cases don't have families at all and are not ready for independence. At this point, I think, that we have to say that the act, and no other structure either, is not responding to that group of young people, or at least not well enough. These are young people who would most likely be seen if they were not teenagers as being neglected or abandoned and go into the formal structures, but that is not happening in most places, so we are often in the position we are putting together a system of support for that young person that we know is not the best or the most stable circumstance for those youth.

The fourth are the young people who live on the streets, and they are the ones that we all see most often, because the media focuses so much attention on the young prostitutes and young people who have to make their lives on the street. In terms of these young people, I want to say I don't think there is a mandate in our society to do much about those youth, but if there were, we would have to recognize very specialized services would be needed in order to really make a difference.

That is one of the other points that I want to make. In terms of these various populations, I think our kinds of services provide very well for the two populations, the young people have resolvable family problems and the independent-living youngsters, provided there is specialized services for those young people. It is not the same thing to help a young person move in the transition to adulthood in a crisis mode. It doesn't fit, it doesn't work. There has to be the capability developed to help them through that transition, which is often a year or 18 months. Certainly we know how to do those things, but without resources in many places they are plainly not going on.

I just want to say I think one of the things that we have to recognize about it is without this kind of system, there is an insidious allowance really of these young people to move into the other systems that exist, the juvenile justice system, the mental health system, the homelessness system, and that certainly does happen. The fallout from us creates problems elsewhere.

However, I want to say that what is wonderful about the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act is we have developed some tremendous successes, and we know how to do things, and we are tremendously able, if we get a young person at an early enough point, to make a real difference following that course of self destruction and family destruction, and so I think more than anything else that is what mandates or should guide the kind of active support that this kind of a bill really needs and to recognize, because we are providing such a tremendous service and successfully in preventing other kinds of societal problems that are much more troubling, we really need to enhance the system that we have, the capability that we have to provide those services.

We can do the work, but we can only do the work to a limited extent if we are not in a position to make the kind of outreach on the young people we know we are not touching yet.

I think the act has made, and this is kind of a compilation, at least three contributions: The positive placement rate of 94 or 95 percent means an overwhelming majority of young persons are helped to reconcile with their families or find another stable living situation. I think that alone argues for us not only to be able to continue but to be really able to develop the capacity to do the things we know how to do.

Again, less obviously, I think all the youth, when they are helped in this way, in this much less expensive way, won't enter some of the other very costly and very destructive systems. We know these systems are not doing a good job of helping young people to move toward productive adulthood. Reconciling troubled families saves taxpayers' dollars and helps assure our children are a more productive adult.

Additionally, and in a broader sense, I really believe that family focused services really help to strengthen our communities. I think we work with families because that is the basic social unit. But to strengthen families means you are touching the lives of a lot more people in a community. Whatever the problems are, however we analyze the problems, I think everybody agrees we need to have communities and families able to help their young people to grow, and much of what is not going well for people is that very breakdown.

I just want to say that most of my prepared testimony began to get into the issues of the formulation of the current pie that exists. And I feel inspired by hearing some of the questions, particularly today, to say that I really think that we would be having a very different conversation if there were in the broader sense the real commitment to this way of trying to reach trouble people before the problems got too terribly bad that they had to enter the other formal systems.

You know, the issue there are 2,000 young people in the District, that is not at all unique, I don't think the District has anything unique about it except being a city-state perhaps. We have a 12-year old in the District who just held up a store to be able to get cocaine. That, too, is perhaps something that we are seeing in a city that has an extreme amount of poverty. But that means that we are moving in that direction after all.

And I just feel very strongly that I want to use the opportunity to say, to whatever extent I can be convincing to you, this is a program that really does work, that we do make a difference in the lives of young people and families and, therefore, convince you in your role, becoming a true advocate for the program is of value to you; then I feel like I have at least done something here today. Because I really do feel, I do have some ideas about what should happen in terms of the formulation, but it would be wonderful to be talking about three times the amount of money, and then we could be looking at what we are doing for kids.

However, in the formulations I do believe the basic center grants should be getting the highest priority. I think that the provision of basic services should be expanded and should be at minimum about

85 percent of the total amount of money that is there. I think many of the current funding levels are much too low to allow new service providers to offer services or to assure quality programming.

Sasha Bruce Youthwork currently receives all the basic center funds allocated to the District of Columbia under this act. The allocation, which is the lower limit, is $39,000. It represents 11 percent of the costs to maintain the shelter. The shelter itself serves over 300 people a year. In our outreach program we serve an additional 200. Many shelters need to contract out bed space to existing government services in order to make ends meet. This is not the intent of the Runaway and Homeless Act. The act is meant to provide emergency help to young people and families in need who come by self-referral.

A basic center grantee, it seems to me, should not need to sell its beds to another government system for its existence. Similarly, since funds are allocated by States, new programs in the States which have great need but already have several good problems are discriminated against because of the high level of services in their State.

Additionally, the legislation should allow sufficient flexibility that allocations could be made to States based on a formulation of perhaps 75 to 125 percent of the State allocation, the minimum being 75 percent, but the allocation could go up to at least 125. So there could be a flexibility to spread between States where the needs were.

Additionally, I would propose that there be a five percent pot of special money for programs which can argue special circumstances. There are programs in this country serving a tremendous number of young people, for instance, programs that have an especially great problem in finding other funding. So that there could be, again, some flexibility to target funds.

Additionally, current State allocations are made based on the youth population of under 18-year-olds. I think the allocations should be based on ten to 17-year-olds or ten to 18-year-olds, depending on how you do it, so it is targeted to the population of teenagers who are much more likely to be young people who would be running away.

Another point I want to make is I don't believe any State or Territory should get less than $75,000 as a lower limit for a State. I think that it is problematic for some of the smaller places to be able to raise all the additional funds that they would need, and $75,000 would still continue to be seed money.

Finally, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act can be strengthened by more effectively using funds set aside for more coordinated networks. What I am suggesting here is to allow the natural groupings within a particular region to come together and compete equally for coordinated networks. It would not be hard to do this, I don't think. It would just be a change in the way things are done.

I want to say something about the research and demonstration grants. I think that many of the research and demonstration grants have been tremendously helpful, have really helped to bring some knowledge in looking at how we are doing the work that we are doing. I do think given the current circumstance, and perhaps continuing circumstance, of there being a limited pot, that the R&D money should be limited and that the emphasis should be on basic centers; certainly not eliminated, but limited perhaps to five percent of the total, and that the preference should be given in those programs to programs that are going to contribute directly to direct practice.

Thank you again for the opportunity to join you this morning. I hope it will be helpful.

[The prepared statement of Deborah A. Shore follows:]

TESTIMONY OF
DEBORAH A. SHORE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SASHA BRUCE YOUTHWORK, INC., WASHINGTON, DC
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

January 29, 1988

Chairman Kildee and members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to join you this morning. I am delighted to voice my support of the reauthorization of Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.

This morning, in addition to informing you of the ways the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act makes a difference for youths and families in crisis, I hope to challenge you to become advocates for this population. Your thoughtful consideration and active support of programs for families in need of help strengthens our society and serves as an investment in the future. Helping troubled families and runaway children today prevents delinquency, homelessness and increased strains on our society tomorrow.

I founded Sasha Bruce Youthwork (SBY) in 1974 and have been serving runaway and homeless young people and their families ever since. I have attached information about our agency to this testimony. Therefore I will briefly describe our work and the general problems facing troubled families in Washington, D.C. Then I will specifically describe the four populatons of young people requiring assistance from the runaway and Homeless Youth Act and discuss how the Act does or does not serve these young people.

I. Youths in Crisis in Washington, D.C. and Sasha Bruce Youthwork

Washington, D.C. is a city with a high incidence of runaways, homeless teens, youth at risk and drug involved youth. It is a city of contrasts. We are surrounded by a wealthy large metropolitan area that includes parts of two other populous states. While the suburbs are mostly white, the city has a large minority (70 % black residents, 95% black enrollment in public schools) population. While the Congress establishes policy and grapples with national social issues, some of the most intransigent social problems flourish in the shadow of the Capitol. Among these social ills: 1/4 of all live births in the District are to teenagers, 53% of all youth between 14 and 18 are on public assistance, black youth unemployment hovers at 40.5%, D.C. has the highest crime rate index in the South Atlantic Geographic Division, the senior high school dropout rate is 32%, and PCP and cocaine use are at epidemic proportions among teenagers and young adults (D.C. is considered a PCP capital of the country).

Divorce and single parent households dominate family life in the city and large numbers of teenagers who have grown up with family, school and economic problems, are turning at younger ages to running away, drugs and early disaffection (for instance, an eleven year old was recently arrested for drug sales).

Runaway programs have special knowledge about the homeless population. Independent living programs need not be run by Basic Center grantees or other runaway service providers. However, independent living grantees should be required to show a strong relationship with a runaway services provider. At a minimum this should be a referral relationship.

Despite the need and proven success working with homeless youths, money for this program should not be taken from Basic Center Grants. At a minimum the Act should mandate services for the homeless youth population. States and the Federal Government should be challenged to allocate portions of their funds for homelessness toward the future: our teenagers.

C. Young People Who Do Not Have Resolvable Family Problems And Are Not Ready For Independence

This population is growing and we have few solutions for them. They are young people who were abandoned or abused or whose families, for some other reason, are unable to care for them. However, they are not yet old enough or mature enough to begin self-sufficiency.

This year 15% of the young people who came to the Sasha Bruce House were in this group. These youths need long term planning and support. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act should challenge the states and the District of Columbia to provide for these young people. Documentation of need could certainly be established by gathering information from Basic Center grantees. We need more information about what is happening to these young people and new positive strategies to serve them.

D. Youths Who Are Living on The Streets

This is the most visible population of young people out of the home, yet our society is not definitive about its commitment to help them. Helping these youths is possible, but not easy. They require special long term efforts -- a crisis intervention model is not sufficient.

A special Federal effort, not possible under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, should mandate services to this population. Successful strategies to help young people off the street should incorporate close cooperation between service providers and law enforcement agents. Simply contacting these youths is not sufficient. They need to develop relationships with service providers who can offer support when they experience a crisis and decide to leave the streets. Law enforcement agents and service providers should become allies to insure that such services are made available.

III. Support for Reauthorization of the Act and Suggested Funding Priorities and Amendments

This act has earned reauthorization. The success of the program is evident through its positive placement rate and effectiveness as a means of returning youths in crisis to stable living situations. I do not know of anywhere in the country that the formal social service

Funding for Basic Center grants should be increased. This is the most significant area of Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funding and it effectively serves the majority of those youths in need. We must increase allocations so new providers can become grantees and current grantees can better respond to the needs.

B. Older Homeless Adolescents Who Can Benefit From Independent Living Services

This second population is another that we know how to help. Although it is less visible than the population of adult homeless who sleep on the streets, America has a large population of homeless adolescents who need more than crisis intervention services. Given a specialized program which includes employment and life skills training and support, they are able to become self sufficient adults.

This population of young people is between 16 and 19 years of age. They are too old for most available social services, but not yet ready to be independent. They have not been able to reconcile with family or find other natural resources. Their family has died, they have been abandoned, or they cannot return home due to abuse or severe family dysfunction. They know how to survive, but not how to make it on their own.

Through a discretionary grant, Sasha Bruce Youthwork has established an Independent Living Program for this populaton here in Washington, D.C.

The Sasha Bruce Independent Living Program

The Independent Living Program (ILP) is the newest Sasha Bruce Youthwork effort for Washington's homeless youths. Through the ILP, qualified teens (16 and older) locate suitable foster homes, receive employment counseling and help with finding a job, and work toward the goal of becoming financially independent. The ILP also provides counseling, helps the youths find apartments and roommates, and offers start-up financial assistance when they are ready to strike out on their own.

Once a young person is stabilized in a job and home, the Independent Living Program continues to help, identifying basic skills and training needs. In addition, the program provides aftercare followup to assure that each youth has the support needed to succeed in living independently.

Since the program's beginning, in 1986, 88% of the homeless youths who have entered the program have conquered homelessness. Over two-thirds have successfully established complete independence.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act has taken a first step towards providing for this population by recognizing its need for services. Now, the Act should mandate services for this population and call upon agencies addressing issues of homelessness to recognize and respond to the needs of older homeless adolescents.

A. Young People Whose Family Problems Can Be Resolved

The vast majority (probably 75%) of young people who runaway or are in crisis, are in difficult family situations which, with the proper support, can be successfully resolved.

To help the majority of runaway teenagers we must help their entire family. We must see them not as problem children, but as members of a family system which has broken down and become dysfunctional. As service providers, we help family members stop blaming each other for problems in the home and start working together to create a successful family structure.

By the time a young person runs away or a parent throws a young person out of the home, both the child and the parents feel like failures. Neither feels the other pay attention or understands. The family is often experiencing typical tension between adolescents and parents, but the family lacks the skills or proper supports to work out its problems. Eventually, either the parents or the child or many times both parties decide that this will be better if the child is no longer in the house.

Ninety-five percent of missing children are runaways. They are young people who left home to make things better. Their leaving home is a cry for help and for support for themselves and for their families. They don't run far, typically not more than two miles away from home. But they run far enough that someone will pay attention.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act successfully begins to address the needs of these families because it encourages the provision of comprehensive, family focused services. Basic Center grants support outreach to families in crisis, adequate assessment of needs, emergency shelter, individual, group and family counseling and aftercare.

The most successful runaway programs around the country have comprehensive programs which combine all of those components. Our Sasha Bruce House, for example, had a 95% positive placement rate for young people who stayed at the shelter last year. That means we helped 95% of the young people return to a stable living situation -- 75% of the residents reconciled with their families found a new way to get along with their families and successfully returned home. Our staff receive two hours of training each week in structural family therapy and we provide multiple family support groups after young people return home.

That's the good news. The bad news is: the need is far greater than the service providers capacity to respond. Basic Center funding is targeted appropriately and is the most effective means of serving the majority of troubled families. However, the funds are insufficient. Typically, preventive outreach services and supportive follow-up aftercare are the first things to be eliminated when funding is tight.

Runaways in Washington, D.C.

SBY served over 500 youth last year in our runaway and homeless youth programs. Of the youth we served in the Sasha Bruce House residence, 95% were positively placed into stable living situations and family counseling services are provided to almost 90% of all families. But our efforts stand out as a lonely example of quality alternatives for families in need and outreach is all too often limited to the youth or families who happen to hear of our agency. In fact, we know that there are many thousands of District and out-of-state youths who have runaway from home but for whom no intervention services are made available.

Over two years ago and with a grant from HHS, SBY and the Child Advocacy Center organized the D.C. Task Force on Runaway and Homeless Youth whose final report elucidates the problems with the "system" for runaway and homeless youths in the District and makes recommendations for change. Through a careful analysis of the available data, it was determined that 2,300 D.C. youth were known to have run away in the last year and were provided no services. The committee agreed that, at minimum, each year 2,000 of these youth would likely avail themselves of services if they were offered. A major gap in the service system for many of these youth is when they are returned home by police and not referred for services. The D.C. police are now restricted by internal regulation from referring to private agencies but based on the Task Force's strong recommendations, we hope this can be changed. Additionally, the report noted the serious lack of information for youth and families who are at risk about community services and the great need for preventive home based family services.

Profile of a Typical Client

SBY serves Washington area youths in crisis (ages 8 to 19) and their families. Most of these young people are members of single-parent families and are experiencing problems such as lack of family structure, poverty, overcrowded homes, or family involvement with drug or alcohol abuse. Typically, SBY clients are having problems at home, in school, and in the community. Many of them suffer from low self-esteem, and have become street-wise and distrustful rather than successful and happy in their relationships with others.

II. Four Populations of Youth Needing Assistance from the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act

There are generally four populations of troubled young people for whom we must provide services. Each troubled young person and family has a unique set of circumstances and problems which must be addressed. I suggest the following categories, not to over simplify those problems, but to give us a context in which to discuss solutions. The solutions for these populations are not always the same.

Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Inc.

Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Inc. (SBY) is a private, non-profit organization that serves over 1,000 youths in crisis and their families each year.

Agency History

Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Inc. began as a streetwork counseling agency (Zocalo Outreach) in 1974 to help the large number of runaway youths on the streets find the services available to them. Zocalo continues to seek out and work with young people in their natural settings (at school, home or community). It provides crisis intervention and runaway prevention and links youths and families who would not otherwise self-refer with a helping network of services.

We opened Sasha Bruce House in 1977 as a temporary home for runaway and homeless teens. The house is open 24 hours a day and provides shelter for 350 youths each year. Our work with young people and their families helps most youths return home. In 95% of all cases, we help youths return to a stable living situation which means they do not continue to run or become institutionalized.

In April 1979, we began Community Advocates for Youth (CAY) to allow juveniles awaiting court proceedings to remain in the community under careful supervision rather than be incarcerated. In June of the same year our Consortium for Youth Alternatives was formed to provide an alternative to court processing for alleged offenders. It is jointly administered by four youth agencies. These programs for court referred youths have an average of a 10% re-arrest rate for youth which compares to the rate of 65% to 70% for youths who go through normal court processing.

The Rosa Parks Shelter Home, for youth deemed to be beyond parental control, began in June of 1981. It now serves eight (8-14 year old) boys in a short term residence which improves damaged family relationships, assists youths in their schooling and develops better interpersonal skills. Then, in November 1983, the Sasha Bruce House moved to its present location at 1022 Maryland Avenue, NE and in 1984, the former building became the home of our new Teen Mothers Program, a residential program for neglected an abused teenagers and their babies. The first of its kind in the District, this long term residence improves parenting skills and develops life management skills that enable independence.

In 1986, Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Inc. officially began an Independent Living Program to help older homeless adolescents make the transition to self sufficiency. We teach the young people life and employment skills and support them as they move out on their own.

Each of the programs started by Sasha Bruce has survived and grown and enjoys an excellent reputation for its services and management. In 1988, we will again help between 800 and 1000 youths and their families. These clients will receive individual, family and group counseling as well as education and legal assistance, recreation, job placement and advocacy.

system doesn't rely upon the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act to keep young people out of unnecessary systems by reconciling families.

Three contributions of the Act should be especially noted. Most notably, the positive placement rate of 94% for all youths served in 1987 means that the overwhelming majority of young people served were helped to reconcile with their families or to find another stable living situation. That alone is a significant accomplishment. But, less obviously, all of the youths helped were also prevented from entering other systems -- most notably the juvenile justice system. Reconciling troubled families saves taxpayers dollars and helps assure our children a more productive adulthood. Finally, family focused services strengthen the health of our communities. Empowering young people and their families to resolve their problems strengthens the family unit which is at the root of our society.

It is because of the proven success of this Act as it is written that I challenge you to critically consider any amendment which might weaken the Act's effectiveness.

As I described earlier, Basic Center grants provide the core of this Act's effectiveness. They should be given highest priority and no amendment should be accepted which could diminish these grants. Rather, the Act's provision of services through Basic Center grantees should be expanded. The total funding for Basic Center grants should be increased and should not comprise less than 85% of the total funds allocated under this Act.

Another way in which the Basic Center grants could be strengthened is by establishing minimum amount for grant awards. Many current funding levels are too low to allow new service providers to offer services and too low to insure quality programming for youths in crisis.

Sasha Bruce Youthwork currently receives all of the Basic Center funds allocated for the District of Columbia under this Act. However, the city's total allocation, $39,759, represents only 11% of the cost to maintain the Sasha Bruce House, the only emergency shelter in the District of Columbia which houses over 300 young people each year. We have been able to piece together supplemental funding, but other small states with high incidences of runaway behavior share our dilemma. Many shelters need to contract out bed space to existing government social systems in order to make ends meet. This is not the intent of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. The Act is meant to provide emergency help to any young person or family in need at anytime. A Basic Center Grantee should not need to depend upon another government system for it existence. There is not enough money available because moneys are allocated soley on the basis of the number of youths under age 18 in a given state.

Similarly, since funds are allocated by states, new programs in states which have great need, but already have several good programs, are discriminated against because of the high level of service in their state. The allocation is fixed by the legislation and cannot be expanded to include more flexibility insuring that good programs get developed and funds are not left unused. The legislation should allow sufficient flexibility that allocations could be made to the states based upon not less than 75% or more than 125% of their youth population.

Alternately, I would propose that the Act set aside 5% of its funds as a supplementary pot of money for programs which can argue that theirs are special circumstances. This money could be distributed through a special allocation process after the regular grants allocation process.

Currently, state allocations are made based upon the number of youths under 18 years of age. In fact, allocations should be based upon the number of youths in the state who are 10-17 years of age because those youths are the most liable to run away or need supportive services. No state or territory's allocation should be less than $75,000.

Finally, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act can be strengthened by more effectively using funds set aside for coordinated networks. Currently, these funds are distributed to the Regions, but a Region is often not a natural network. Natural groupings of providers, whether local, statewide or regional, should be encouraged to form networks and allowed to compete for coordinated networking funds.

Again, I heartily support reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. The changes I suggest are meant to further strengthen the Act's use of Basic Center Grantees for the continued provision of essential services to Runaway and Homeless young people and their families. We have established effective methods to help troubled families; we must now aspire to help all of those in need.

Thank you again for the opportunity to join you this morning. I beg your thoughtful consideration, I welcome your questions and I thank you on behalf of the runaway and homeless young people we serve.

Ms. **Avent**. I am H. M. Avent, project director for Stepping Stone Youth Crisis Shelter and also project director for the Middle House Youth Transitional Living Project, located in Santa Monica.

Stepping Stone is a short-term crisis shelter, 14-day limit, providing the usual counseling, advocacy, peer staff counseling, family reunification services. The Middle House Project is an independent living program serving adolescents 16 to 17.

Stepping Stone is supported partially by a basic center grant and the Middle House Project is partially supported by a discretionary grant.

I am very pleased to be here. It is not often that a service provider has the opportunity to input directly relative to our own existence money-wise to the people who actually make these kinds of decisions, so it really is a pleasure. I feel that the reauthorization of this bill is critical, particularly in the Los Angeles area or the State of California. Many of the youth we serve would otherwise go unserved.

Unfortunately, the State of California has no ongoing State-sponsored programs directly affecting our runaway and homeless youth. There is a pilot program authorized by the State under a special act. However, funding for that will discontinue as of June.

On the local level, the only public entity providing comprehensive services to runaway and homeless youth is a pilot project operated by the Department of Childrens' Services.

Now, we are talking about Los Angeles County. Los Angeles has a reputation for being a mecca for runaway youth. We have the greater of Hollywood, we have 35 miles of public beaches, and until December we had great weather. In Los Angeles County, there are 70 beds, 70 crisis beds. Forty-two of those beds are operated by private, nonprofit agencies. four of those agencies are partially supported by basic center grants, and the fifth will be applying for a grant this cycle. The remaining beds are operated—are foster beds operated under contract with the Probation Department, which basically means of that 70 beds, only 42 of them are accessible to youth without having to go through the system or Probation Department.

As a result of this, we are finding in LA County we are turning away a tremendous amount of youth. The data I am going to give you was culled from a system of care reports operated by the Childrens Hospital, Los Angeles High Risk Youth Project. We are a member of that data collection system, and our data varies little. There are some differences.

From October 1 of 1986 through September 30 of 1987, the five shelters turned away almost 3500 kids. Stepping Stone, in a month, may turn away 80 or more kids in a day, depending on how cold it is, how wet it is and what other services are available. We may get calls from 20 or 30 kids, so there is definitely a need to be addressed here.

We look to the numbers of youth, particularly those youths who migrate from out of state. Our data indicate one out of five are from out of state. Thirty-seven states were represented, so we are getting a fairly broad range of kids. However, the bulk of the kids that we serve do come from LA County. The next greater number comes from out of state.

The system care shelters provided services to 1600 youth during that period, the SODA system ended up serving 1300 youth. There are also four drop-in centers in the system, and they provided services to 7,000 youth in the area. Most of their youth, however, are from out of town, and the differences, shelters require consent and a lot of kids don't want parents contacted at this point, and they know that and ultimately don't come into the system.

In terms of socioeconomic data, about 42 percent were homeless, and Stepping Stone data indicates 34 percent of our population is homeless. I mean homeless in the same way you see homeless adults. However, these are not people who you can identify because they don't have their shopping carts and don't live in cardboard boxes. However, they don't have the parent or legal guardian available or willing to provide them the basic necessities. Forty percent of them indicate a history of abuse, Stepping Stone data is a bit higher than that. We find almost half our kids come in indicating either sexual or physical abuse in the family.

We find that about 47 percent were white, 27 percent were black, 17 percent hispanic. It should be noted within the hispanic population we are seeing, probably because of our location, we are seeing an increasing number of Central American families. So that estimate is on the rise for sure. We are seeing about four percent Pacific Asian families and two percent Native American. The remainder are unknown at this point.

Because of the changes in the population, I think when the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act was enacted in 1974, probably most of the agencies were seeing what we consider the classic runaway, those youth whose problems were acute but could be resolved. We are now seeing an increasing number of what we are calling throwaway youth, those youth who have been invited to leave their homes as opposed to doing that on their own.

Because of this, I think we really do need to look at re-ordering our priorities and increasing the services that are necessary to support this population. We don't want to eliminate services to the classic runaway because they are there. I think we do need to look at independent living programs as a means or method of eliminating some of the problems we are seeing on the streets in Los Angeles. I think we need to be probably looking at an increased family support system, because we are finding, of course, most of our youth are coming out of very dysfunctional families, and perhaps if we could intervene two or three steps earlier, we might be able to eliminate some of that in the long run.

And because of the changes our outcome data has drifted a lot more to a much greater percent of the youth we see returning to the streets. At last survey, 23 percent of our youth are returned home, three percent went to live with other relatives, 16 percent went into foster and group home care. In Los Angeles, while the demand for those particular services are increasing, the supply is decreasing rapidly.

Seven-and-a-half percent went into independent living programs. Thirteen percent went to other run-away shelters. It is an interesting phenomenon because most of the shelters are seeing some of the same kids.

We have a revolving door syndrome. And 31 percent of the youth provided services return home. I tend to be a fairly pragmatic person, and I think that if we look at the cost of what it takes to support a youth in, let's say, a juvenile hall in L.A. which at last count cost the county about $29,000 a year per kid. When you look at the cost for most of us which probably averages $75 to maybe $150 a night in service, I think we need to look more at intervention, diversion and short-term care programs. It would eliminate a greater percentage of our youth missing that correction system, thereby eliminating some of the costs. It is hard to believe that a country with this kind of wealth can't provide the support for its future generations.

We look to you to make a public policy statement about your commitment relative to the value of our generations, and as a result of that, feel that reauthorization of this particular bill will go a long way to make a very clear statement about our responsibility on a national level.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Hida M. Avent follows:]

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Testimony of Hida M. Avent
Presented to the U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Education and Labor
Subcommittee on Human Resources

My name is Hida M. Avent and I am the Project Director of Stepping Stone Youth Crisis Shelter and The Middle House Youth Transitional Living Project, located in Santa Monica, California.

Stepping Stone is a six bed shelter providing services to runaway and homeless youth (ages 7-17) and their families. It is licensed by the State of California and the County of Los Angeles. The program was implemented in 1979 and is a project of the Ocean Park Community Center. Stepping Stone has been partially funded through The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act Basic Center Grant since 1981.
The Middle House Project is a nine (9) month transitional living program serving homeless youth, ages 16 and 17. This program is partially supported by a Runaway and Homeless Youth Act Discretionary Grant.

While, as a youth service provider, I am interested in all aspects of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, I will confine my testimony to Title III - The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.
As a service provider in Los Angeles County, I strongly urge that the JJDPA of 1974 be reauthorized through 1992. Very simply put, in my opinion, this act was and remains one of the most comprehensive and visionary pieces of youth related legislation enacted. First, the act acknowledged that there were substantial existing problems relative to the juvenile population and that those problems had the potential to escalate dramatically. Secondly, the act recognized, from a public policy perspective, a clear responsibility to seek resolutions.

Reauthorization of the JJDPA is critical - it provides for the contiuation of services to thousands of youth, who otherwise would go unserved, due to non-existent and/or fragmented state and local service delivery. There appears to be very few states or local governments with specific budgets for services to runaway and homeless youth. In California, which may have an estimated 25% of the homeless and runaway youth population, there are no on-going state sponsored programs for this population. In 1986, the State passed a Homeless Youth Act (AB1596), under which two pilot programs to provide services to homeless youth were funded. However, funds allocated through this act are scheduled to expire June 30, 1988. On the local level, The Los Angeles County Department of Childrens services created the Runaway Adolescent Pilot Project (RAPP) to provide services to runaway and homeless youth, who other might remain unserved. This project also implemented in 1986, is the only public program offering comprehensive services to runaway and homeless youth.

In Los Angeles County most of the comprehensive services targetted for runaway and homeless youth are provided by private non-profit agencies. The majority of those are partially supported through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of 1974.

Los Angeles, with its reputation for being a "mecca for runawaya and homeless youth, has only 70 crisis beds for runaway and homeless youth. Forty-two (42) of these beds are operated by five (5) non-profit shelters. The remaining beds are foster care beds operated under contract with the Los Angeles County Probation Department's Status offender Detention Alternative (SODA) program. SODA was created in 1977 to meet the alternative placement needs of adolescents resulting from the deinstitutionalization of status offenders.

The following data will provide a quick overview of the status of service delivery to runaway and homeless youth in Los Angeles. This data was obtained from The Childrens Hospital of Los Angeles High Risk Youth Program's System of Care Reports. Stepping Stone is a participant in this data collection system and our program data, generally, varies little from the overall system's data.

From October 1, 1986 through September 30,1987, 3494 youth requesting shelter services were turned away due to lack of space. The 5 previously mentioned shelters provided services to 1600 runaway and homeless youth. Stepping Stone data indicates that in fiscal 1985/86, 180 youth were sheltered; during 1986/87, 230 youth were served; and for the first six months of 1987/88, 137 youth have been provided shelter. SODA facilities sheltered 1302 and four (4) outreach programs, located in Hollywood, provided drop-in services to 7,613 runaway and homeless youth.

Geographic data indicates that 1 in 5 runaway and homeless youth provided services were from out of state - 37 states were represented. Other data reveals that 27% served were from Los Angeles city and 37% from the county. Shelters report that 40% of the runaway and homeless youth served, indicate histories of abuse and neglect. Thirty-two (32%) percent were homeless and 45% were 15 years of age and younger (the youngest was 9). Forty-seven (47%) percent were Caucasion; 27% Black; 17% Hispanic; 4% Pacific Asian; 2% Native American; and 3% unknown.

Non-traditional methods of connecting are often neccessary to bring runaway and homeless youth to service programs and few public agencies have the flexibility to use the same techniques employed by successful non-profit programs. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of 1974 has afforded the opportunity and funds required to develop these techniques. Otherwise, services to runaway and homeless youth would be stagnant.

While, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act remains in the vanguard, it should be noted that the runaway and homeless youth population has changed since the act was implemented in 1974. Shelter programs report providing services to fewer "classic" or situational runaway - those youth who have run due to acute/resolvable crisises. Increasing numbers of the current population consists of throwaways, justifiable runaways (away from home because of abuse or neglect) and homeless youth.

Services must be reordered and honed to meet the needs of this new population. Services offered to homeless youth must be significantly different than for runaways. Homeless youth generally require a wider range of services, including shelter, food, counseling, advocacy, mental health care, education, job training and employment services.

This change in population points to a need to look to independent living/emancipation as a more realistic goal than, perhaps permanent family reunification. This goal can be accomplished with independent living programs, coupled with other comprehensive services. However, few such programs are available to runaway and homeless youth and this scarcity may be a factor in the number of youth returning to the streets.

Outcome data from the System of Care Report indicates the following:
- 23% of youth served returned home
- 3% went to live with other relatives
- 16% went to foster or group homes
- 7.5% went into independent living programs
- 13% went to other runaway shelters
- 31% returned to the streets.

At this juncture a pragmatic look needs to be taken relative to homeless youth's potential for involvement in criminal activities and the cost of administering juvenile and adult corrections systems. Currently in Los Angeles county, it cost $29,000 per year to keep a youth in juvenile hall. Intervention and comprehensive support services are a lower cost alternative to having runaway and homeless youth end up in the corrections system. For example, services at Stepping Stone cost approximately $76 per night.

One last point, we must decide if our youth are worth the energy, effort and money necessay to resolve some very obvious problems. Reauthorization of the JJDP Act makes a clear statement on the national policy level that we do value these youth. Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much.

Carol.

Ms. THOMAS-SMEDES. Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, my name is Carol Thomas-Smedes and I am the Executive Director of the Advisory Center for Teens in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Advisory Center is comprised of several youth-serving programs including a residential runaway program called the Bridge, for which I served as Executive Director between 1985 and 1987.

The Bridge, along with 26 other runaway programs in Michigan, make up the Michigan Network of Runaway and Youth Services, a statewide association for which I currently serve as Vice-President. I am pleased to speak to you today on behalf of the runaway and homeless youth of Michigan, and the various people and agencies struggling to meet their needs.

In your deliberations over the reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, I believe it will be instructive for you to look at Michigan for several reasons.

Given the State's diverse demographics, runaway programs in Michigan serve the full spectrum of urban, suburban, and rural communities. While it may be said that there are commonalities shared by all runaways and their families, the environment of inner city Detroit is vastly different from that of a small town in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

These differences greatly impact the types of problems presented, and the treatment strategies in counseling. Consequently, member agencies of the Michigan Network include both residential sheltercare facilities and foster care programs, which place runaways in State-licensed foster homes for up to 14 days while family problems are worked out. Population density and size of service area also account for a wide divergence in the ability of programs in Michigan to diversify funding and secure community support for their services.

Michigan runaway programs also enjoy strong financial support from the State, stemming from our State government's decision in 1974 to invest in a statewide system of service delivery to runaway youth and their families. This initiative was clearly a result of the passage of the Runway and Homeless Youth Act that year.

In addition to program dollars, it entailed the creation of our networking association. Throughout its existence, the Michigan Network has made it possible for us to coordinate the search for new funding sources, and to alleviate the financial stress of program competition for Federal grants. It has provided extensive training for members in grantsmanship and fund raising, enlisted major corporations in statewide outreach and public relations, and promoted the participation of youth as mandated by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

And what has the State received in return for its investment? In a moment I will share some answers to that question in specific, human terms, drawn from my own agency's recent experience.

Last year our Michigan runaway programs provided direct service to over 8,000 runaway and homeless youth clients, eighty-five percent of whom were re-integrated with their families or placed in an alternative setting agreeable to both the youth and his or her parents.

Given that, only roughly one-third of all runaways seek help at a shelter or counseling agency—and the limited capacity of such programs to serve those who do seek help—this figure should be taken as a marker rather than as a full measure of the runaway problem in our State. Indeed, in the same year, runaway programs received well over 40,000 contacts from people regarding runaway incidents.

I would refer you to the top of my testimony on page 3. There is a chart showing that the increase from 1983 to 1986 in the number of contacts made to programs in Michigan for help and information has gone from 27,000 to over 41,000 in just those few years.

In addition to high demand, Michigan Runaway programs are burdened by increased costs. On top of inflationary increases in the food, shelter, medicare and utilities, in recent years, some runaway programs have been hit so hard by increases in liability insurance that they can no longer afford to carry it.

This decreases program viability as community members refuse to serve on program boards for fear of potential lawsuits. It also undermines the search for alternative funding as private foundations withdraw their support from agencies unable to protect themselves from liability claims. Those programs which do continue to carry liability insurance at three or four times the previous rate are forced to compromise services accordingly.

Other rising expenses similarly tie our hands, stricter demands in State licensure requirements have increased costs for staff training. Many of the buildings occupied by shelters and program offices are old and require structural work, major maintenance and repairs.

The new requirement in 1984 that non-profit agencies participate in the Federal Social Security Act meant an equivalent of a budget cut of seven percent of staff salaries for many of the programs.

Staff turnover has become a critical problem at almost every Michigan runaway program. The stress is high in those program jobs and the salary is very low.

As one director reported to the network office last year, with turnover there is confusion, morale problems, and uncertainty, all of which has an impact on client services. We can't compete even with fast food places for what we expect from a staff person and what we offer in compensation.

Many excellent young counselors find their first employment at a runaway program where they are able to acquire the experience and training they need in order to move on to a position that will pay them a decent living wage. The resulting turnover rate makes effective staff development nearly impossible to achieve.

In spite of the State-wide service delivery system we have in Michigan, there remain geographic areas where youth in need of services are unable to get them. Ironically, this is as true for our rural programs as it is for those in urban districts although for very different reasons. A survey conducted in 1986 revealed that in that year alone runaway programs in metropolitan Detroit were forced to turn away 202 youths seeking shelter because all the beds were full.

While the existence of several programs within the greater metropolitan Detroit area often makes it possible to place runaways in another program, this requires complicated and time-consuming transportation arrangements, which at the very least impede the counseling process.

Transportation programs take on an entirely different dimension when we look at the rural northern half of our State. The service area for Rainbow, the runaway program in Alpena, Michigan, consists of 14 counties and is larger than the size of the State of Connecticut and, by the way, one person serves that area.

In the upper peninsula, some runaways would have to travel 200 miles to reach the nearest program in Escanaba, Michigan. The counselors for the Youth Attention Center in Big Rapids, Michigan, another rural program, travel over 2,000 miles a month to meet with clients and in a two county service area.

Despite their obvious geographic handicap, the success rates of these programs are as high as those in urban and suburban programs. The youth they see get the help they need, but we know for certain that not all the youth who need help in rural areas are finding their way to a program.

To appreciate the relationship of Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funds to the problems that I have described, it is necessary to examine the way in which those funds have been parceled out over the past several years to programs in Michigan. Again, I refer you to a chart in my testimony.

The first important point to note is that more than half of the programs in the Michigan network have never received or applied for RHYA funding. Currently only 13 programs receive a portion of Michigan's $723,000.

That figure has remained constant for the last four years, but unfortunately, the number of programs sharing it has not. The last time Michigan's appropriation increased significantly was in 1983, and it was mainly to fund three new programs, bringing the total number of federally funded centers to nine.

The following year, the number of funded programs remained constant, with the total appropriation reduced slightly. It was a manageable loss—manageable at least when compared to 1985 when HHS chose to fund 20 additional programs for the same amount of money. This meant a cut in funding to seven programs including a $24,000 cut to my agency, the Bridge.

Each year since, one additional program has been funded with no commensurate increase in the total appropriation resulting in a loss of some of the previously funded basic centers.

I am aware that added dollars are appropriated for 1988. I hope the philosophy will be to supplement existing programs with these dollars because Michigan's program gains have always meant a loss to others, a loss coinciding with increased demand for services, increased insurance and program cost, rampant staff turnover and a continuing segment of our State receiving inadequate coverage.

Not only does this exacerbate these existing problems, it undermines the cooperative networking relationship that we in Michigan worked so hard to achieve. If additional centers are to be funded, additional money must be spent to fund them.

I would like to talk to you about some of the young people that we have seen, the human lives that I have been privileged to see my agency touch. The only other common elements of their story are a remarkable will to survive in the face of overwhelming trauma and the strong possibility that if the Bridge had not been there to help them, no one else would.

There was Sheri, a 13-year-old girl in the eighth grade, who came to the Bridge with a former client who was her friend. Sheri had run away from her middle class home because she was being sexually abused by her stepfather. It had begun when she was nine, but she had never told anyone about it until she came to the Bridge four years later.

Our counselors helped her to tell her mother and continued family counseling through the confrontation with her stepfather and his ultimate confession, his arrest and his removal from the home by Protective Services.

Sheri's nine days at the Bridge surely brought about one of the most important changes in her life. She and her mother were referred for additional mental health support, to continue healing the wounds of her trauma.

There was Malcolm, a young man referred to us by another agency when he was in the ninth grade. Like many of our clients, Malcolm came to us after a fight with his parents. In this case, the fight was over his mother's lifestyle, which included allowing Malcolm's 13-year-old sister to have her 19-year-old boyfriend always spend the night. Usually the mother was absent from the home herself every night.

It soon became clear that the only rules that existed in this chaotic household were the responsibility of and were enforced by Malcolm himself, who at the age of 14 was the only responsible person in that family.

Malcolm's mother, who was unemployed, divorced and alcoholic, had been the subject of an active Protective Services case for many years. In fact, Malcolm himself had been removed from her home when he was a pre-schooler for two years, only to be returned to her at the age of five.

Coordinating services with the Protective Services caseworker and the Grand Rapids police, the Bridge offered support and safety to Malcolm as he tried to bring about a stable living environment for himself and two younger sisters. With that goal in mind, Protective Services worked toward the termination of his mother's parental rights.

There was Jeannie, a 15-year-old whose circumstances were similar to many of today's children of divorce. After disagreements with her mother, Jeannie was sent to live with her alcoholic father in another city. Here other conflicts developed between Jeannie, her father and the three step-siblings who came to live with him.

When her father brought her to us, it soon became clear that the girl had never in her life experienced a stable home environment. Having been emotionally shuffled back and forth between two parents for most of her life and trying now to live with an unpredictable alcoholic, her anger and low self image motivated a crisis. The Bridge offered counseling to Jeannie and her parents and after ten days at the shelter arranged for ongoing counseling and her successful re-integration into her mother's home.

And there are those whose needs are so great they threaten to overwhelm us as well as the child, like Shawn. At age 16, Shawn came to us several times over the course of one year. She was initially referred to us by her school's principal, who had found her in the school's dumpster after hours.

Her mother who lived in a tent in a campground was unemployed, alcoholic and mentally ill. Her father was dead. She lived with two siblings, including a brother who sexually abused her. Throughout her times at the Bridge, Shawn was suicidal, extremely depressed and exhibited behaviors of her own mental illness.

Ultimately our role in working with her family was to advocate for Shawn's needs, counseling her, providing emotional support and assistance when she was called to testify at a hearing which investigated her allegation of sexual abuse. And seeing to it that she has found the mental health care that she needs.

I wish I could tell you that every story was reasonably happy or at least health in its ending, but the sad truth is that sometimes we just don't know.

There was Daniel, a 15-year-old Hispanic youth adopted at birth by a white middle-class couple who had already adopted several other special needs children. They brought Daniel to the Bridge after his release from detention for shoplifting. Due primarily to intense conflict between Daniel and his father, the parents refused to take him back home and wanted him placed in a mental health residential treatment setting.

This was difficult to achieve because no one except the parents thought that such a placement was appropriate. Through special arrangements with the Department of Social Services, Daniel spent three weeks at the Bridge, during which time we saw him change from an angry and hostile young man into a cooperative, happy, peer group leader.

He opened up to counseling and recognized the need to continue working in therapy with his parents on their problems. Unfortunately, his father was unrelenting in his insistence that he be placed in a residential care facility and would not take him back home. I don't know where Daniel is today.

Wherever he is, I and the staff who watched him work and watch him grow wish him well.

These are not remarkable stories. Last year I was able to say, yes, I will help you to 340 youth, no more or less remarkable than these, who came to my program seeking shelter and counseling.

By empowering me to do this to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, you gave these young people what may have been the last chance they will get to turn their lives around and to take responsibility for themselves and move on toward a healthy and productive adulthood.

I thank you and I applaud you for that gift and I urge you to confirm it with a continued commitment to meeting the needs of runaway and homeless youth.

I must say a few final words about the second half of that population, homeless youth. Although we are constantly mentioning them in the same breath with runaways, it is important to remember that the needs of homeless youth are very different from those of runaways.

Obviously, the basic treatment goal of returning a runaway into his or her home is rendered meaningless when there is no home to return to. Still, homeless youth are showing up in increasing numbers at runaway programs in Michigan.

In my shelter alone, last year there were 90 requests for help from homeless youth. Up until now we have done what we could to help them but with only fourteen days of shelter to offer, that clearly isn't much.

The treatment goal with homeless youth must be to provide them the independent livings skills we expect children to derive from their parents. A longer intervention is required, as well as new approaches and counseling. Unfortunately, very little attention from the public is garnered by the issue of homelessness in recent years. It has not been focused on young people.

Funds have been allocated but homeless youth have been largely ignored as a target population. No special funding has been designated for basic services to homeless youth in the Stuart McKinney Act and even the language of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act pays little attention to the special needs of these youth. Homeless youth who sought shelter in Michigan runaway programs in recent years were usually 15 through 17, emancipated under existing Michigan statutes by their parents or guardian, high school dropouts, unskilled, unemployed, without resources of any type, immature and in need of mental health services and without any support system.

They came from all races and all socio-economic backgrounds. Statistically over 80 percent of the case histories examined by the Michigan network included incidents of sexual abuse. When physical abuse is added as a variable, nearly 100 percent of these youth may be considered victims of parental abuse. Stories of emotional neglect also abound among this population.

Recently my agency succeeded in securing start-up funding for an independent living program to meet the needs of at least some of the homeless youth, coming to our runaway shelter for help. I can best portray the goals of that program to you by telling you about Daenen.

Daenen entered the home Youth Program November 2, 1987, the day the program began operation. He is 17, not legally emancipated, a high school dropout, former substance abuser. He has received mental health counseling in the past along with his mother who is unstable and unpredictable. His father was a drug user and committed suicide ten years ago.

His 16-year-old brother is also living out of the home. Daenen has no other family and his friends are people his age whom he knows through his part-time job at a local restaurant.

Daenen had been living with his mother until their rocky relationship fell apart last October and she kicked him out. He initially came to the Bridge for services as a runaway, returned home briefly and was kicked out once again.

The second time he was asked to leave home he withdrew his savings of $140 and rented a room in a local budget motel. When he contacted our homeless youth program he had no money left, no place to stay and he had not eaten in four days.

Our case manager had him return to the Bridge. She helped him find a room to rent through a newspaper which he now pays for from his earnings from his part-time job. She helped him apply for medicaid which was extremely important because Daenen is asthmatic and requires daily medication. He declined food stamps although he was eligible because he believed he could feed himself in other ways and doesn't wish to be seen as dependent.

He has now checked out his educational options and intends to take his GED exam in the spring. The room he rents is in the home of a family whose parent is a school teacher and this influence and environment has been extremely beneficial. At this time Daenen is looking for a second job to help pay for his remaining expenses.

He is learning living skills with an emphasis on budgeting. He has a savings account. He pays his rent on time and he has learned how to conduct himself in job interviews. The six goals he established for himself in early November to be able to support himself to finish high school, to find a job, to learn budgeting, to add to his independent living skills and to have his basic needs addressed are close to being accomplished.

The homeless youth program has had 50 contacts since it opened in November and is presently serving nine active cases in Grand Rapids, 60 days into operation, of a one-year grant of $20,000 from our local United Way. The implementation of our independent living program was the fulfillment of a dream for us, at last allowing us options for the truly homeless clients, who could not really get what they needed from our runaway shelter alone. Homeless youth are a discrete and severely at risk service clientele.

If their needs are truly to be met as indicated in the existing language of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, additional resources must be provided towards that end.

In conclusion, on behalf of the network I would like to make the following five or six recommendations to this committee to consider in the reauthorization of this important act.

First, we recommend that Congress consider placing a first priority on strengthening current grantees who are successfully carrying out their missions.

Second, the wording of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act should be changed to more accurately reflect all runaway programs, including rural agencies.

Third, the committee should explore and give serious consideration to changing the formula for distribution of Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funds. Perhaps a special indicator such as State unemployment levels could be used to supplement State allocations.

Such a formula change would enable the Department of Health and Human Services to put funds into States that are suffering economic hardships, such as farm belt and industrial States, where the Census data does not function as an accurate predictor of family problems.

Four, the authorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act should continue to support its runaway networks.

Fifth, we also recommend that Congress appropriate additional monies for independent living programs, to help alleviate the growing homeless youth crisis our country faces.

And, last, we recommend that Congress increase the appropriation for funding to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, more money is needed to help strengthen existing runaway programs, as well as to create independent living programs and additional runaway programs.

I am very aware of the Federal deficit problems and grave economic problems that this country faces. In fact, our programs deal on a daily basis with people who are directly affected by these problems.

However, in your deliberations of how best to spend the taxpayer's money, you must remember that runaway programs and independent living programs are a bargain. In Michigan, for approximately $50 a day, runaway receives shelter, food, individual and family counseling.

I am sure you are familiar with the expression "you can pay for it now or you can pay for it later".

In this instance, later means having to pay for increased welfare rolls, construction of more prisons and more drug abuse programs. A few million dollars invested in runaway and homeless youth now will save hundreds of millions to the taxpayers later.

While throwing money at a problem rarely solves it, runaway programs are a proven success. We know how to help these youth and families and we need the resources to do it. I urge you to strongly consider investing now in the future of some of our nation's most promising citizens.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Carol Thomas-Smedes follows:]

Prepared Statement of

Carol Thomas-Smedes, Executive Director
The Advisory Center for Teens
Grand Rapids, Michigan

HEARING ON THE REAUTHORIZATION OF
THE RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH ACT

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

January 29, 1987

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Carol Thomas-Smedes and I am the Executive Director of the Advisory Center for Teens in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Advisory Center is comprised of several youth-serving agencies, including a residential runaway program called The Bridge, for which I served as Executive Director between 1985 and 1987. The Bridge, along with 26 other runaway programs in Michigan, make up the Michigan Network of Runaway and Youth Services, a statewide association for which I currently serve as Vice-President. I am pleased to speak to you today on behalf of the runaway and homeless youth of Michigan, and the various people and agencies struggling to meet their needs.

In your deliberations over the reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, I believe it will be instructive for you to look at Michigan for several reasons.

Given the state's diverse demographics, runaway programs in Michigan serve the full spectrum of urban, suburban, and rural communities. While it may be said that there are commonalities shared by all runaways and their families, the environment of inner city Detroit is vastly different from that of a small town in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. These differences greatly impact the types of problems presented, and the treatment strategies in counseling. Consequently, member agencies of the Michigan Network include both residential shelter-care facilities and foster care programs, which place runaways in state-licensed foster homes for up to 14 days while family problems are worked out. Population density and size of service area also account for a wide divergence in the ability of programs in Michigan to diversify funding and secure community support for their services.

Michigan runaway programs also enjoy strong financial support from the state, stemming from our state government's decision in 1974 to invest in a statewide system of service delivery to runaway youth and their families. This initiative was clearly a result of the passage of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act that year. In addition to program dollars, it entailed the creation of our networking association. Throughout its existence, the Michigan Network has made it possible for us to coordinate the search for new funding sources, and to alleviate the financial stress of program competition for federal grants. It has provided extensive training for members in grantsmanship and fundraising, enlisted major corporations in statewide outreach and public relations, and promoted the participation of youth as mandated by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

And what has the state received in return for its investment? In a moment I will share some answers to that question in specific, human terms, drawn from my own agency's recent experience. For now let me just say that last year, our runaway programs provided direct service to over 8,000 runaway and homeless youth clients, 85% of whom were reintegrated with their families or placed in an alternative setting agreeable to both the youth and his or her parents. Given that only roughly one-third of all runaways seek help at a shelter or counseling agency--and the limited capacity of such programs to serve those who do seek help--this figure should be taken as a marker rather than a full measure of the runaway problem in the state. Indeed, in the same year runaway programs received well over 40,000 contacts from people regarding runaway incidents.

Before I create in your minds the impression that runaway services in Michigan are an unconditional success story, let me reiterate that I am glad to have you look at Michigan in your deliberations. I am glad, because in Michigan we are doing what needs to be done. We are serving urban, suburban, and rural families in ways that are appropriate to their needs and environment. We are reaching out to our communities and to our state as a whole for support. We cooperate with each other, have formed strong linkages, and share resources to meet training and service needs. Most importantly, the youth and families we serve are learning to become self-reliant by making positive changes in their lives.

We are networking, we are diversifying, we are succeeding--and in spite of all this we are struggling every year just to keep our agencies solvent. For the reasons that I am about to present, our demonstrated success has not alleviated our continuing need for program dollars to maintain an acceptable level of service delivery by existing programs.

Increased Demand

First of all, the increased availability of services to runaway and homeless youth has led to an ever increasing demand for those services. This is not surprising. When you begin to help a population in crisis--especially if you're good at it--it is not unusual to discover that the size of that population is larger than you thought. When a rescue ship starts throwing out life preservers, other drowning people are likely to start swimming toward the ship.

Such has been our experience. Every year since its inception, the number of people contacting Michigan Network agencies for assistance has increased. The following chart shows contact totals for the past four years.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES AT MICHIGAN RUNAWAY PROGRAMS

YEAR	NUMBER OF CONTACTS MADE TO PROGRAMS FOR HELP/INFO
1983	27,000
1984	30,000
1985	39,362
1986	41,531

That's 41,531 hands waving for a life preserver in 1986. And at the same time, unfortunately, the life preservers are getting more expensive.

Increased Costs

On top of inflationary increases in the cost of food, shelter, medical care, and utilities, in recent years some runaway programs have been hit so hard by increases in liability insurance that they can no longer afford to carry it. This decreases program viability, as community members refuse to serve on program boards for fear of potential lawsuits. It also undermines the search for alternative funding, as private foundations withdraw their support from agencies unable to protect themselves from liability claims. Those programs which do continue to carry liability insurance at three or four times the previous rate are forced to compromise services accordingly. Jackson County Diversion, the program in Jackson, Michigan, discontinued its home visits for exactly this reason.

Other rising expenses similarly tie our hands. Stricter demands in state licensure requirements have increased costs for staff training. Many of the buildings occupied by shelters and program offices are old and require structural work, major maintenance, and repairs. The new requirement in 1984 that nonprofit agencies participate in the federal Social Security Act meant the equivalent of a budget cut of 7% of staff salaries for many programs.

Each additional blow to a program's budget forces a difficult choice between eliminating services or reducing the quality of service delivery. As you can see, each time we must make such a choice, we lose both program effectiveness and credibility within our communities, making it that much harder to seek support elsewhere.

An important part of our work with young people is teaching them to recognize the consequences of their actions. Similarly, I must speak to you today about the consequences which increasing costs and increasing demand are having on our programs and the youth we serve.

Inadequate Salaries/Staff Turnover

Staff turnover has become a critical problem at almost every Michigan runaway program, and every program director knows why. You would be hard pressed to find a job where the stress is so high and the salary so low. As one director reported to the Network office last year, "With turnover there is confusion, morale problems, and uncertainty, all of which has an impact on client services. We cannot compete, even with fast food places, for what we expect from a staff person and what we offer in compensation."

Granted, it is immensely satisfying to help teenagers in crisis turn their lives around. But the process, let me tell you, is no picnic. And we owe our counselors and youth care workers far more for their efforts than a warm inner glow and the same standard of living afforded the average McDonald's employee. Many excellent young counselors find their first employment at a runaway program, where they are able to acquire the experience and training they need in order to move on to a position that will pay them a decent living wage. Tne resulting turnover rate makes effective staff development nearly impossible to achieve.

Unserved Youth

In spite of the statewide service delivery system we have in Michigan, there remain geographic areas where youth in need of services are unable to get them. Ironically, this is as true for our rural programs as it is for those in urban Detroit, although for very different reasons.

A survey conducted in 1986 revealed that in that year alone runaway programs in Metropolitan Detroit were forced to turn away 202 youth seeking shelter because all the beds were full at the time. And while the existence of several programs within the greater Metropolitan Detroit area often makes it possible to place runaways in another program, this requires complicated and time-consuming transportation arrangements which at the very least impede the counseling process.

Transportation problems take on an entirely different dimension when we look at the the rural northern half of the state. The service area for Rainbow, the runaway program in Alpena, consists of 14 counties and is larger in size than the state of Connecticut. In the Upper Peninsula, some runaways would have to travel 200 miles to reach the nearest program, in Escanaba. The counselors for the Youth Attention Center in Big Rapids, another rural program, travel over 2,000 miles a month to meet with clients in a two-county service area.

Despite their obvious geographic handicap, the success rates of these programs are as high as those of urban and suburban programs. The youth they see get the help they need. But we know for certain that not all of the youth who need help in rural areas are finding their way to a program.

A true achievement of the objectives of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act must entail attention to the client needs at both the overcrowded urban shelter and the overextended rural foster care program. The consequences for an unserved suicidal youth in either setting are equally dire.

Apportionment of Federal RHYA Funds

To appreciate the relationship of RHYA funds to the problems I have described, it is necessary to examine the way in which those funds have been parceled out over the past several years to programs in Michigan. (The chart on the following page shows the amount and distribution of RHYA funds in Michigan since 1982.)

The first important point to note is that more than half of the programs in the Michigan Network have never received nor even applied for RHYA funding. This is attributable once again to the cooperative spirit of our state network. We all face the same economic crunch, and therefore feel the same temptation to seek funding wherever it is available. We recognize, however, that to further subdivide Michigan's share of the federal pie would ultimately dilute the quality of services for everyone. For this reason we have generally (though not entirely) managed to avoid competing with each other for RHYA money.

Currently 13 programs receive a portion of Michigan's $723,648. That figure has remained constant for the last four years. Unfortunately, the number of programs sharing it has not.

The last time Michigan's appropriation increased significantly, in 1983, it was mainly to fund three new programs, bringing the total number of federally funded centers to 9. The following year, the number of funded programs remained constant, with the total appropriation reduced slightly. It was a manageable loss.

Manageable, at least, when compared to 1985, when HHS chose to fund two additional programs for the same amount of money. This meant a cut in funding to seven programs, including a $24,000 loss for my own agency, The Bridge. Each year since, one additional program has been funded with no commensurate increase in the total appropriation, resulting in a loss to at least some of the previously funded basic centers.

In other words, one Michigan program's gain has always meant a loss to several others--a loss coinciding with increased demand for services, increased insurance and program costs, rampant staff turnover, and a continuing segment of our state receiving inadequate coverage. Not only does this exacerbate these

FEDERAL RHYA FUNDING IN MICHIGAN

YEAR	STATE TOTAL	NUMBER OF RUNAWAY PROGRAMS
1982	$ 434,543	6
1983	$ 725,900	9, Two of the 6 programs receive increases. 3 new programs funded
1984	$ 723,648	9 programs funded
1985	$ 723,648	11 programs funded, 7 programs cut the following amounts: $32,928, $24,000, $21,409, $12,479 $10,000, 3,000, 3,000
1986	$ 723,648	12 programs funded, 4 programs cut the following amounts: $27,840, $7,000, $5,000, $5,000. One program increased $5,000.
1987	$723,648	13 programs funded, 1 program cut

existing problems, it also undermines the cooperative networking relationship we in Michigan have worked so hard to achieve. If additional centers are to be funded, additional money must be spent to fund them.

Furthermore, the formula used to determine Michigan's share of RHYA funds, if strictly applied, will mean a significant reduction in the state's total appropriation ih the years ahead. This is because the formula uses population as the sole indicator of the need for runaway services. A closer look at Michigan's situation will show you that this is erroneous. Michigan's population has been on the decline for several years now; the need for our services has markedly risen. I would like to suggest that at least some consideration be given to economic indicators when determining a state's need for runaway services. Certainly sufficient research exists to justify economic hardship as a more likely predictor of family breakdown than population increase.

Client Profiles

As the difficulties in maintaining effective service delivery have increased in recent years, so have the problems presented by our clients. There may have been a time when it was possible to list "running away" as one youth problem among the litany of problems presented by the current generation of teenagers. That is no longer appropriate. In order to talk comprehensively about the youth served by runaway programs today, we must talk about virtually every social problem affecting youth, to wit: teen pregnancy, substance abuse, poverty, single parent households, unemployment, mental illness, domestic violence, sexual abuse, neglect, and homelessness. Each of these, and often several of them in combination, is now a motivating force in causing thousands of youth to leave home each year.

Rather than talking about such problems in the abstract, however, I'd like to tell you about some of the young people who experienced these problems--the human lives I have been privileged to see my agency touch. The only other common elements of their stories are a remarkable will to survive in the face of overwhelming trauma, and the strong possibility that if the Bridge had not been there to help them, no one else would have.

There was Sheri, a 13-year-old girl in the eighth grade, who came to the Bridge with a former client who was her friend. Sheri had run away from her middle class home because she was being sexually abused by her stepfather. The abuse had begun when she was nine, but she had never told anyone about it until she came to the Bridge, four years later. Our counselors helped her tell her mother, and continued family counseling through the confrontation with the stepfather, and his ultimate confession, arrest, and removal from the home by Protective Services. Sheri's nine days at the Bridge surely brought about one of the most important changes in her life. She and her mother were referred for additional mental health support to continue healing the wounds of her trauma.

There was Malcolm, a young man referred to us by another agency when he was in ninth grade. Like many of our clients, Malcolm came to us after a fight with his parent. In this case, the fight was over his mother's lifestyle, which included allowing Malcolm's 13-year-old sister to have her 19-year-old boyfriend spend the night, and usually being absent from the home herself at night. It soon became clear that the only rules that existed in this chaotic household were those enforced by Malcolm himself, who at age 14 was the only responsible person in the family. Malcolm's mother, who was unemployed, divorced, and alcoholic, had been the subject of an active Protective Services case for many years. In fact Malcolm himself had been removed from her home when he was a pre-schooler, only to be returned to her at age five. Coordinating services with the P.S. caseworker and the Grand Rapids police, the Bridge offered support and safety to Malcolm as he tried to bring about a stable living environment for himself and his two sisters. With that same goal in mind, Protective Services continued to work toward the termination of his mother's parental rights.

There was Maya, a thirteen-year-old from a small town north of Grand Rapids, whose complicated family dynamic might easily have left her homeless, had our agency not been there to help. Very early in her adolescence, Maya discovered that the 62-year-old woman she had always called her mother was really her grandmother, and that her real parents were both dead. The conflict which escalated from this basic family lie caused Maya to develop premature sexual behaviors which further angered her grandmother. House rules became more strict, and Maya became all the more adamant in breaking them. Protective Services became involved with the case after the grandmother refused to allow Maya to return home. Maya stayed at the Bridge for 13 days, after which she was successfully placed in foster care.

There was Jeannie, a 15-year-old whose circumstances were similar to many of today's children of divorce. After disagreements with her mother, Jeannie was sent to live with her alcoholic father in another city. Here, other conflicts developed between Jeannie, her father, and the three step-siblings who lived with him. When her father brought her to us, it soon became clear that this girl had never in her life experienced a stable home environment. Having been emotionally shuffled back and forth between two parents most of her life, and trying now to live with an unpredictable alcoholic, her anger and low self-image motivated a crisis. The Bridge offered counseling to Jeannie and both her parents, and after ten days in the shelter arranged for ongoing counseling and her successful reintegration into her mother's home.

And there are those whose needs are so great, they threaten to overwhelm us as well as the child, like Shawn. At age 16, Shawn came to us several times over the course of a year. She was initially referred to us by her school's assistant principal, who had found her in the school's dumpster after hours. Her mother, who lived in a tent in a campground, was unemployed, alcoholic, and mentally ill. Her father was dead. She lived with two siblings, including a brother who sexually abused her. Throughout her times at the Bridge, Shawn was suicidal, extremely depressed, and exhibited behaviors with evidenced her own mental illness. Ultimately, our role in working with her family was to advocate for Shawn's needs, counseling her, providing emotional support and assistance as she was called to testify at the hearing which investigated her allegations of sexual abuse, and seeing to it that she found the mental health care she needed.

I wish I could tell you that every story has a reasonably happy--or at least healthy--ending, but the sad truth is that sometimes we just don't know. There was Daniel, a fifteen year old Hispanic youth adopted at birth by a white middle class couple who had adopted several other special needs children. They brought Daniel to the Bridge after his release from detention for shoplifting. Due primarily to intense conflict between Daniel and his father, the parents refused to take him back home, and wanted him placed in a mental health residential treatment setting. This was difficult to achieve because no one except the parents thought such a placement appropriate. Through special arrangement with the Department of Social Services, Daniel spent three weeks at the Bridge, during which time we saw him change from an angry and hostile young man into a cooperative, happy, peer group leader. He opened up to counseling, and recognized the need to continue working in therapy with his parents on their problems. Unfortunately, his father was unrelenting in his insistance that he be placed in a residential care facility, and would not take him back home.

I don't know where Daniel is today. Wherever he is, I and all the other staff who watched his work and his growth wish him well.

These are not remarkable stories. Last year I was able to say "Yes, I will help you" to 340 youth, no more or less remarkable than these, who came to my program seeking shelter and counseling. By empowering me to do this through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, you gave these young people what may have been the last chance they will get to turn their lives around, take responsibility for themselves, and move on toward a healthy and productive adulthood. I thank you and I applaud you for that gift, and I urge you to confirm it with a continued commitment to meeting the needs of runaway and homeless youth.

Homeless youth

I must say a few final words about the second half of that population--homeless youth. Although we are constantly mentioning them in the same breath with runaways, it's important to remember that the needs of homeless youth are very different from those of runaways. Obviously, the basic treatment goal of returning a runaway to his or her home is rendered meaningless when there is no home to return to.

Still, homeless youth are showing up in increasing numbers at runaway programs in Michigan. In my shelter alone last year, there were 90 requests for help from homeless youth. Up until now, we have done what we can to help them, but with only 14 days of shelter to offer, that clearly isn't much. The treatment goal with homeless youth must be to provide them the independent living skills we expect children to derive from parents. A longer intervention is required, as well as new approaches in counseling.

Unfortunately, very little of the public attention garnered by the issue of homelessness in recent years has focused on young people. Funds have been allocated, but homeless youth have been largely ignored as a target population. No special funding has been designated for basic services to homeless youth in the Stuart McKinney Act, and even the language of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act pays little attention to the special needs of these youth.

Homeless youth who sought shelter at Michigan runaway programs in recent years were usually 15 - 17, emancipated under existing Michigan statutes by their parent or guardian, high school dropouts, unskilled, unemployed, without resources of any type, immature, in need of mental health services, and without any support systems. They came from all races and all socio-economic backgrounds.

Preliminary research done on homeless youth by the Michigan Network of Runaway and Youth Services indicates that when the homeless youth population is separated from the runaway population and classified as "throwaways" or "pushouts," rates of all types of abuse increase dramatically. Case histories of homeless adolescents gathered throughout the state chronicle their legacy of trauma. Feelings of powerlessness, betrayal, and stigmatization are frequently found among this group. Statistically over 80% of the case histories examined by the Michigan Network included incidents of sexual abuse. When physical abuse is added as a variable, nearly 100% of these youth may be considered victims of parental abuse. Stories of emotional neglect also abound among this population.

As a family disintegrates, the person in his or her mid to late teen years can find himself or herself alone and homeless. Because they are so close to 17, in Michigan support services are few. Eighteen is the age of majority, when the complexities of emancipation for minors disappear.

Recently my agency succeeded in securing start-up funding for an independent living program to meet the needs of at least some of the homeless youth coming to our runaway shelter for help. I can best portray the goals of that program to you by telling you about Daenen.

Daenen entered the Homeless Youth Program on November 2, 1987, the day the program began operation. He is 17, not legally emancipated, a high school dropout, and former substance abuser. He has received mental health counseling in the past along with his mother, who is unstable and unpredictable. His father was a poly-drug abuser and committed suicide ten years ago; his 16-year-old brother is also living away from home. Daenen has no other family, and his friends are people his age whom he knows through his part-time job at a local restaurant.

Daenen had been living with his mother until their rocky relationship fell apart in October and she kicked him out. He came to the Bridge for services as a runaway, returned home briefly, and a crisis once again erupted.

The second time he was asked to leave home he withdrew his savings of $140 and rented a room at a local budget motel. When he contacted the Homeless Youth Program, he had no money left, no place to stay, and hadn't eaten in four day.

The case manager had him return to the Bridge. She helped him find a room to rent through the newspaper, which he pays for with his earnings from the part-time job. She helped him apply for Medicaid, which was extremely important since Daenen is asthmatic and requires daily medicine. He declined food stamps, although he was eligible, because he believed he could feed himself in other ways and he does not want to be seen as dependent. He has now checked out his educational options and intends to take his GED exam in the spring. The room he rents is in the home of a family whose parent is a school teacher, and this influence and environment has been extremely beneficial. At this time Daenen is looking for another job to help pay for his remaining expenses. He is learning living skills, with an emphasis on budgeting. He has a savings account, pays his rent on time, and has learned how to conduct himself on job interviews. The six goals he established in early November--to be able to support himself, to finish high school, to find a job, to learn budgeting, to add to his independent living skills, and to have his basic needs addressed, are close to being accomplished.

The Homeless Youth Program has had 50 contacts since it opened in November, and is presently serving nine active cases in Grand Rapids 60 days into operation of a one-year grant from our local United Way.

The implementation of our independent living program was the fulfillment of a dream for us, at last allowing us some options for the truly homeless clients who could not really get what they needed from our runaway shelter alone. Statewide in Michigan, a handful of such programs have begun similar operations. Clearly, we have just scratched the surface of the population in need, and already I feel confident in telling you that if runaway programs are indeed to continue their work with homeless youth, it cannot be done with existing funds, or the existing services designed for runaways. Homeless youth are a discrete and severely at-risk service clientele. If their needs are truly to be met as indicated in the existing language of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, additional resources must be provided toward that end.

Recommendations

In conclusion, on behalf of the Network I would like to make the following recommendations to this committee to consider in the reauthorization of this important act:

1) **We recommend that Congress consider placing a first priority on strengthening current grantees, who are successfully carrying out their missions.**

Since the last four years have been spent expanding the number of programs, and since programs nationwide have faced increased expenses and inflationary costs, but have never received increases to help offset these expenses, the time has come to put an emphasis back on ensuring that existing programs have enough resources to operate successfully and continue to provide services.

2) **The wording of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act should be changed to more accurately reflect all runaway programs, including rural agencies.**

The current wording is geared primarily to suburban and urban runaway houses. Specifically, it talks about centers being located in areas that are accessible to many runaway youth, and it discusses client/staff ratios. This wording does not fit with rural runaway programs, particularly programs that utilize "host homes" or foster care instead of a shelter. The Network recommends that this wording be changed to reflect the more rural or foster care type programs.

3) **The Committee should explore and give serious consideration to changing the formula for distribution of Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funds.**

Perhaps a special indicator, such as state unemployment levels could be used to supplement state allocations. Such a formula change would enable the Department of Health and Human Services to put funds in the states that are suffering economic hardships.

such as farmbelt and industrial states, where the census data does not function as an accurate predictor of incidence of family problems.

4) The reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act should continue its support of runaway networks.

The Michigan Network also recommends that one emphasis of discretionary grants should be to improve transportation needs so that young people will have easier access to runaway programs.

5) We also recommend that Congress appropriate additional monies for independent living programs to help alleviate the growing homeless youth crisis that our country faces.

New dollars are needed for programs specifically designed to help youth learn how to live independently, because unless some form of intervention is set up to help these young people learn how to be productive adults, they will grow up dependent on public assistance or resorting to illegal activities to survive. These young people have the same hopes and dreams as our children and deserve the chance to live out their dreams. Money earmarked now for independent living programs will be more than compensated by the liberation of tomorrow's adults from dependency on public assistance.

6) We recommend that Congress increase the appropriation for funding the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

More money is needed to help strengthen existing runaway programs, as well as to create independent living programs and additional runaway programs. I am very aware of the federal deficit problems and grave economic problems that this country faces. In fact, our programs deal on a daily basis with the people who are directly affected by these problems. However in your deliberations in how best to spend the taxpayers' money you must remember that runaway programs and independent living programs are a bargain. In Michigan, for approximately $50 a day, a runaway receives shelter, food and individual and family counseling. I'm sure you're familiar with the expression "you can pay for it now or pay for it later". In this instance, "later" means having to pay for increased welfare rolls, construction of more prisons, and more drug abuse programs. A few million dollars invested in runaway and homeless youth now will save hundreds of millions to the taxpayers later. While throwing money at a problem rarely solves it, runaway programs are a proven success. We know how to help these youth and families, but we need the resources to do it. I urge you to strongly consider investing now in the future of some of our nation's most promising citizens. Thank you.

Mr. **Kildee**. Thank you very much. The final witness this afternoon is Mike Montoya. We appreciate your patience. We look forward to you sharing your knowledge and experience with us.

Mr. **Montoya**. My name is Michael Miguel Daniel Montoya. You can call me Mike, though.

I am a little bit nervous as you can tell.

Generally, I guess I am here to tell my side of the story. I grew up until I was nine in a small town of Lafeyette in Colorado. At that time I moved with my father to Phoenix, Arizona, and that is where the trouble, you could say, began. There I started getting into gangs, into small time drugs, just generally searching around, because I felt that my home life was very unsatisfactory.

After bouncing back and forth between Colorado and Arizona three or four times between my mother, grandmother and my father, my father ended up moving to Michigan and my mother kicked me out of my house in Colorado and I moved to Michigan with my father.

There I went to a school which is called Laser and everything started going all right and I thought, well, I will try it the right way.

And I got back into the drugs. I quit fighting at this time because it was beginning to hurt too much. And I got really heavily into drugs, using alcohol and drugs, you name it. Around November of 1987 or 1986, I am sorry, me and my father started having problems, real bad problems.

They had been there but they started increasing. I ended up moving into a friend's house for approximately eight months at which time I got kicked out of there for the same reasons, drugs and alcohol. I had tried going back to my father's previous to the eight months and we would come up to an agreement that he couldn't handle me and I couldn't handle living with him.

At that moment I was out on the streets for approximately three or four weeks. The whole time that I was in Arizona and Colorado, I spent most of my time on the streets. You know, I had a home, but I didn't like home.

Home wasn't for me. After being kicked out of my friend's house, they gave me $40 and a "good luck". I was on the streets for three to four weeks sleeping in gutters, abandoned houses, houses that weren't fully built yet, parks, bumming food from friends, picking up cans for cigarettes, and still partying at that time.

A friend of mine took me into her house and said I could stay there until I get into a program, A Step Forward. I stayed there approximately two weeks and at that time I would ride a bike for six miles one way to get to the Step Forward.

I had to go three times for interviews and stuff like that. And when I got there I was, like, okay, this place is all right. I thought I can get away with a lot of stuff and I did get away with a lot of stuff.

I used regularly when I first got into the program. When I say "used", I mean I got high, I got drunk.

One day I came in and they had caught on, and they gave me the choice of going to AA or being removed from the house and, of course, I took AA.

I have been sober for four, almost five months. The fifth of next month is my fifth anniversary.

I can say from the time I have been in this program, I have been in it for six months, my life is completely turned around. At first it was a little rocky and after I started sobering up and started thinking about it, they gave me support.

When I went into the program, I had absolutely no moral values and it didn't matter what I did. I didn't care.

Now I can look back and say, hey, I care now. I had for myself—I didn't like myself. I didn't like myself at all and I am learning to like myself with their help.

They give me a lot of support day-by-day. When I am having problems at work or if I am having problems with anybody, I can go sit and talk with one of the staff.

I guess we have a certain quota to make, I guess. I can say from my personal experience in that program is that it does work. But a lot of people expect it to work every time. For it to work, the kid has to want it. And my bottom came up on me when I first came to the program.

It was like do it now or don't do it. If that program wouldn't have been there, I wouldn't be around. You know, I wouldn't be here in Washington.

I would be back out on the streets or in Colorado or maybe even Los Angeles. And all I can say is that it works and it is a good place to put money, because there are a lot of people out there that need the help.

I have just last night I ran into one down by my hotel. He was, I figure, about 28, mentally ill and he was sleeping in a sleeping bag on the streets. I stopped and talked to him. And you really begin to wonder, this United States can be such a wonderful place, why there are so many people out on the streets and the programs open, they help a lot, whether people realize it or not, they really do. And I would like to thank you for having me here in Washington.

This is phenomenal. I love this place. It is great. I never have seen a bathroom like yours. Thank you.

Mr. **Kildee**. Thank you, Mike. I appreciate your honesty, candor, and openness.

You mention, Mike, that had it not been for this program this would be quite different for you right now. What do you think you would be doing had you not come in contact with this program? What might be happening to you?

Mr. **Montoya**. In July of last year I was dealing drugs. The thought of prostitution had crossed my mind. Not to guys, mostly married females, hopefully. More than likely, I would be dealing drugs, probably into crack by now and you name it.

In Arizona I had gotten into a breaking and entering to gain—and gang warfare and I am sure I would be into that.

Mr. **Kildee**. Can you tell us how you came into contact with the program?

Mr. **Montoya**. In February of 1987, I was staying at my friend's house and they wanted me to become more independent and at that moment it was like I was still fresh in the house and they still liked me and, you know, they wanted me to become independent.

That just sort of blew by and we talked to Step Forward and it sort of sank in and when I was out in the streets I remembered the place. I didn't know where it was.

I had no idea but I knew it was by the Detroit zoo. I went into my friend's house and they helped me locate and not get to, but get in contact with the staff at the Step Forward.

Mr. **Kildee**. Do you think there are many kids, young persons like yourself still out there on the street because they did not come into contact with a program like this?

Mr. **Montoya**. In my travels across the country I have ran into a lot more kids than I do adults because kids feel that nobody understands them and that is why you get the problems with the drugs and the problems with car theft, because a lot of times people get the kids because they are younger and they are quicker.

And that is, you know, it is generally that. The runaway youth are usually brought into homelessness because they don't think that they have anywhere to go back to. Those are the ones that they talk about that don't get in contact with the programs and they become the homeless.

Mr. **Kildee**. If the program, A Step Forward, had more funds for outreach trying to reach the young people out there, what would be some of the best ways that they could contact and reach these young people?

Mr. **Montoya**. A lot of people that have come into—not come into the program but applied to the program, I have outreach at work, T.V. would be a good one, radio broadcasting. Just general signs in the area. You know, I didn't—before I had even heard of A Step Forward, I hadn't even heard of runaway programs or anything, you know.

To me it was all new. They really have these things where runaways go. I had heard of group homes and stuff where they sent the bad kids or what they called the bad kids, because I believe that there is no such thing as a bad kid.

A mis-led kid, yes. But not bad.

Mr. **Kildee**. You mentioned the use of drugs, Mike. How common is the use of drugs on the street among young people and where do they usually get them from, other young people or from adults?

Mr. **Montoya**. I can say that 90 percent, if not more, of the homeless in general use drugs. And a lot of times—it doesn't really matter who you go to, you can get drugs. There are a lot of people out there that have them, a lot more than anybody really realizes.

Mr. **Kildee**. I will defer to Mr. Sawyer and I will come back for another round of questions.

Tom.

Mr. **Sawyer**. Mike, can you tell us what a day on the street is like?

Mr. **Montoya**. A lot of wandering, not knowing where to go, looking for pop cans, looking for just about anything to do, looking for friends that I had known, trying to get in contact with drugs or alcohol, somewhere to get money so I can go out and party.

Around the evening it is time to find a place to stay. Usually, I look for or I looked for places like—houses that hadn't fully been built, where they had four walls and a roof but no doors or windows, so that you can lay down and sleep, and I would say in the three to four weeks I was out on the streets, I didn't sleep. I sort of wandered.

Mr. **Sawyer**. When you are out there and you are looking for a place to say, why didn't you go to a shelter? You just didn't know about it?

Mr. **Montoya**. I had heard about the Sanctuary, but at that point, I mean, I did not want any contact with my father whatsoever. We did not get along at that moment, and also, I didn't know what they were all about. So mostly I was afraid.

Mr. **Sawyer**. What specifically were you afraid of, what was the deterrent, was it parental contact?

Mr. **Montoya**. Parental contact and not knowing what the program was about. I didn't know what they did there. It was like, you know, these people are strangers and I am going to go talk to these people, and even at Step Forward, first three, four weeks, I walked around and didn't say much to anybody. They weren't sure if I was going to get up and disappear all of a sudden or what was going to happen, if I was going to commit suicide because I didn't talk to anybody because that fear of not having anybody to trust.

Now that I have been there for a while, I am realizing that you can trust them. They are willing—they put out their hand for help.

Mr. **Sawyer**. It was finally desperation, though, rather than anything that overcame that fear that brought you here.

Mr. **Montoya**. Yes.

Mr. **Sawyer**. What are you doing now?

Mr. **Montoya**. Work?

Mr. **Sawyer**. How do you spend your days?

Mr. **Montoya**. Generally I work. I work at a restaurant bussing tables right now. I am waiting reply on a resume from an electronics company. Currently I am looking into getting into a GED program, possibly getting my high school diploma. I own a car now that I have been in the program. It is not much, it is just a little VW, but it moves. I am in the process of getting insurance. I got my permit last month. When I get back, I am going for my driving test.

Generally, you know, I go to AA meetings quite a bit. In fact, I have looked into a few in the area. I go to dances on Saturday night, I shoot pool, just generally that is it.

Mr. **Sawyer**. Where do you want to be a year from now?

Mr. **Montoya**. One of my mottos, or one of the mottos in AA is one step at a time, and at this point I don't know what I will be doing in a year. I would like to be either working full time and living in my own place or going to school, working full-time.

Mr. **Kildee**. A couple more questions of you, Mike. We have a National Runaway Hotline. How knowledgeable are young people in the street of the existence of that hotline?

Mr. **Montoya**. To tell you the truth, I hadn't heard about it until today. Even in school, I had talked to a social worker, she is a real good friend of mine now, and I hadn't heard anything about it. If I am not mistaken, there is a sticker in our window that has hotlines on it. I didn't know what it was for until the hearing.

Mr. **Kildee**. So it is not generally known out in the street from your experience?

Mr. **Montoya**. Not that I know.

Mr. Kildee. That is something we will want to look into in the reauthorization, because it needs to be known, and it does provide an important service for those who do use it. We need more people to be really aware of that.

You mentioned you are involved in AA, which is a tremendous program. I have many friends in that program. It has done a good deal for them. How many young people are you finding in that program?

Mr. Montoya. I have quite a few friends, we all jump in the car and go to AA meetings. The night before I flew down here, we had eight people in a Grenada. I was driving a Cadillac convertible; it was dragging the ground. There is quite a few children in the program. Five months ago, when I went in, it was a bunch of older people telling war stories, and I said "What am I doing here?" I find there is a lot of kids out there who have the same problems I do. That is something a lot of people don't realize. If you get together, you will have somebody to talk to. You have to have mutual trust and understanding.

Mr. Kildee. You obviously have developed some good inter-personal skills. Has the Step Forward been helpful to you in developing these skills?

Mr. Montoya. When I came into Step Forward, I used a lot of slang, street talk generally. My father, one thing I learned about from him was command of the English language, and I had never understood it until Step Forward, and I understood then that with the English language you can get what you want or what you need. They gave me something I never comprehended and still don't, self—I don't know, it is hard to explain it. I have a problem of being real quiet when people start walking toward me or over me, and they have given me like, they have taught us how to stand up for our rights and how to say, "Hey, no, I don't want to do that." Before usually people would usually walk right over me. I don't do much about it, just sort of whatever, kept going my own way. Now I can stop and say, "Hey, that ain't for me."

Mr. Kildee. I have more questions for you. Will you join me for lunch today?

Mr. Montoya. Yes.

Mr. Kildee. I will ask you more questions over lunch, too.

Let me ask some questions of the other panelists for a moment here. I will ask Ms. Avent, and others can join in, there are those who would argue local police agencies should have authority to detain runaways until their parents come and get them. Would you care to comment on that?

Ms. Avent. It is an interesting theory. There are a couple things. One, what happens to a youth who doesn't have a parent willing or able to come to them? Two, why detain a youth who may be a victim, as opposed to a perpetrator of some kind of crime? And, three, for Los Angeles County, where are you going to put them? So, in theory, it may sound great. In practicality, I don't think it is going to work well. I think we need to look at some other types of strategies rather than simple lock-up.

Ms. Shore. I would like to add, I think it would be a great step forward, in terms of the total system, if there were more cooperation with police who were out there potentially touching young people who are on the street and encouraging them to come to services, but it doesn't seem to me quite the right focus either to have a young person detained for their own protection. It seems to me what we know about young people is that they are leaving because they are needing to express some needs, they are wanting something they don't have, and if they can get connected to services that can begin right then to respond to them, they will also respond. We won't continue to have them out on the street.

So better we should have a system where police can, if they happen to find a person, bring them to a shelter or to have services brought to the young person.

Ms. **Thomas-Smedes**. We have recently been asked to put together a new model for the State of Michigan. We were approached last week, in fact, by a representative of the Justice Department to put together some type of model that would call us to one of the local police departments when a runaway or homeless youth was picked up so that a staff from a runaway shelter would come and take responsibility for that young person and then continue with the services rather than detaining the young person. We now have a new law in Michigan which does not allow a runaway or homeless youth to be held in any type of a lock-up setting.

Mr. **Kildee**. As you well know, I share your views on that, as does the law. We get pressure from time to time, put them in a slammer for a time as if that might solve the problem.

Mike, when you were on the street, did you have any contact with the police? Did you find it helpful if you did or can you comment on that?

Mr. **Montoya**. Let's hope this is not too incriminating.

Mr. **Kildee**. No, you may respond in a most casual way.

Mr. **Montoya**. Along the lines of the cops, mostly they tried to catch me. Like I say, tried. Ninety percent of the time I wouldn't even think about it, and I would be out of their way. Sometimes me and my friends would purposely go out and find cops just to raise hell with them—pardon my French. Sorry about that. A lot of times—cops are amazing, they really are. They don't like chasing kids around because, like I said earlier, kids are fast and young. If you get eight cop cars chasing one kid, there are other crimes being committed in other parts of town, so they don't put up—it wouldn't work as well. In certain circumstances, such as robbery or breaking and entering, the cops are, you know—when they are chasing somebody around for curfew, they are wasting their time.

The whole time I was out on the street, the whole time I was anywhere, I had been picked up once, and that was for a curfew violation. The only reason I got picked up is because I decided not to run that time to see what he would do. I outran a fair number of cops, picking them up first by throwing apples at their cars and having them chase us. That was our idea of fun. I would hate to see a lot of kids picked up and locked up because they were runaways, because that wouldn't help anything.

Mr. **Kildee**. The one time you were picked up by the police, did they have any knowledge of that runaway hotline or the program, A Step Forward?

Mr. **Montoya**. The night I got picked up, I was out partying. I was still at home. My dad hadn't nailed my windows shut yet, but he did after that time. No, that time he took the door off the hinges.

Ms. **Avent**. In Los Angeles County, the Los Angeles Police Department, the Hollywood Division is experimenting with something I think is very radical for a police department. They are working very closely with a program there, and rather than detain or even do any paperwork on a youth when they pick him up for status offenses, they will bring them directly to the shelter. This is a program of Lieutenant Ed Hocking, and it seems to be working very well. They have got two police officers in particular who deal with this population.

I would agree, while lock-up is not the best idea, if we really work to establishing closer relationships with the police department, that service, I think we will do well both by the kids and by the programs.

Mr. **Kildee**. Carol, you mentioned in Grand Rapids a turnover in staff because of the low wages. It just occurred to me, with the mention of food restaurants, that you really pay more to those who make a Big Mac than those who care for our children.

Ms. **Thomas-Smedes**. When I began my job two-and-a-half years ago, the residential care staff, who had bachelor degrees, their starting hourly wage was $4.50 an hour. You must remember in that staff of 22 people right now, there are four full-time bachelor degree mental health staff, those are the direct care staff, there are two full-time master-level prepared counselors. Again, when I started there, they were making $17,000 a year, hardly a competitive wage. And there is a full-time secretary, and the rest of the people who work those shifts are part-time, hourly people who work anywhere from maybe one shift eight hours a week to three shifts a week.

They also must supplement, obviously, and they tend to work either a full-time job in another child caring agency or work two different part-time jobs to put together enough money to make $10,000. I am seen as one of the best paid staffs, and I think that that is pretty pathetic.

Mr. **Montoya**. Can I comment on that?

Mr. **Kildee**. Sure.

Mr. **Montoya**. I sort of agree about the payment. It is really low. I am just a bus boy, and I make $3.50 plus tips, so I make around $4.50, and I don't even have a high school education, and that can be sort of a deterrent to people, because, you know, if the money isn't there, why go to school for it?

Mr. **Kildee**. We find the same problem with child care, too, very low wages in child care where the turnover is tremendous. We need people knowledgeable of the care of children. It is a shame our society has its priorities so turned around that we don't recognize that those who care for our children should be considered valuable people in our communities. Hopefully, this subcommittee can do some things to help that, and one of the best ways is the authorization, appropriations and budget process. That is where the priorities start, right here. I think we have a moral obligation to do that.

Tom.

Mr. **Sawyer**. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Let me just comment on that. I don't think there is any question that increasing the size of the pot is the most important task we have to do. Debbie Shore mentioned something we had asked about earlier, and that was the relative size of the pie that is distributed for children—you mentioned 95 percent. Could the other two witnesses comment on that?

Ms. **Thomas-Smedes**. I would agree with Debbie. I am fairly sensitive to this having been cut by a fairly large margin. The only reason I was able to keep the doors open that particular year was the United Way Campaign and gave us help.

I guess I would like to highlight, I have a budget of a little over $350,000 to run The Bridge. I feel fortunate, I am one of the larger programs in the State of Michigan. Partly that is due to the fact we are a metropolitan area, partly that is due to the fact I have incredible community support. The Federal dollars received are only 18 percent of my budget, and I receive terrific help from United Way. I receive more money, $66,000, from my local United Way than I receive from the Federal Government. I also have to say I receive money from our State Department of Social Services, OCYS, $176,000 at this point.

But what I guess I need to say is last year I received $175,000, and my overall increase was $1,600 this year. And I can't depend on an increase from a government source of $1,600 a year. And that is why for me, I feel very fortunate that I can do fund-raising, I can look to other places in my community, churches or individuals, or whatever, but I want to really stress that if I was a rural program or if I was a program in a city that didn't enjoy the economic gain that Grand Rapids has, I would be tough out of luck, and those people are.

When I received my $1,600 increase, others received either that amount or less or were cut, and people were laid off, and there are programs that are substantially below where they need to be, because last year our State was not in very good shape, and we are feeling the results of that.

Ms. **Avent**. I would agree. I think there needs to be a hard look at how those monies are allocated. Stepping Stone is fortunate because we have had a three-year grant. We are into our third year. However, it has been a static amount of money. In effect, we have received what could be called a budget cut.

I think the other thing the members have to realize, for those of us who are partially supported by a grant, it does mean extra fund-raising. With that it means extra time, extra staff time and the extra money it takes to do those types of activities. So we are talking about a very intense decrease of services. We end up cutting into our own abilities to provide those services that we are granted to do because the grants are not supplying us with the support that is needed.

I am not quite sure how to do it. I don't know if it could be allocated on the numbers of youth that have requested services. If so, LA County might get a lot more money. But I think this committee and those of us in the field really do need to look at how to allocate those funds at this point.

Ms. **Shore**. I think it wouldn't be hard to look at the total runaway program as a way in which we function to keep our finger in the dike in a sense. We are able in most communities to work with enough of the troubled family situations and stabilize them enough so that in a sense the communities don't have to see what is bubbling under the surface.

I think what is bubbling under the surface is something we should all be terribly concerned about. What is going on, we won't see it as necessarily young people running away from home, but behavior that is more destructive. The drug involvement of young people once they hit the street is unbelievable. It is beyond our wildest dreams, I think.

So I think in looking to the future and what is going to happen, if the runaway system gets too overloaded, you know, or isn't able to even function—I mean, what we are talking about here is not just maintaining with inflation and all the other things, but really there are real reductions that have gone on in the past couple of years because of the legitimate effort to try to reach out to more young people. We are really talking about not being able to keep ahead of what could be a very serious detrimental wave of losing a generation of young people—top trauma.

Mr. **Sawyer**. We heard earlier "Pay now or pay later."

Ms. **Thomas-Smedes**. If I could say one thing, there has been talk here about how to advertise services maybe is the best way to put it. I just want to give you a striking example of what happened to us last year when we in fact did that. I thought we needed to do that in Grand Rapids. Okay? We have new people moving into the community all the time, there are kids getting to be 10 years of age, everybody needs to know about us.

We went out, raised some money, and we started advertising on the sides of buses with a bus-board campaign, and our Local/State Consolidated Gas Company was gracious enough to buy signs for the insides of all city buses. We only advertised on 10 buses on the outside, and we have 70, 80 or something in Grand Rapids, we did that in March; and from April on, we had 45 kids a month, 47 kids a month, we had an increase every month of another 18 percent. We got to the point that my staff were so burned out, because we were doubling and tripling the number of staff working, and I don't have enough money to go hire more staff. So everybody was working overtime and going home for a few hours so they could come back and do it again.

So we had 13 beds, we were at 13. There were even times we had an extra kid sleeping on a couch. We were doing a lot more, we were doing what we were meant to do, but we are not staffed in a way to consistently be able to do that.

We have just started advertising again. We are starting to see the same thing. The entire month of January we have had a minimum of 11 kids there. So it is a fine line. We want to do that, but, at the same time, if we don't get more money to do that, how are we going to be able to continue?

Mr. **Sawyer**. Let me give you an opportunity to answer a question Mr. Tauke asked earlier, all four of you, the question about whether the availability of space doesn't encourage, as some would suggest, children leaving home, or whether in fact what we are confronting is simply an enormous unmet need, undefined perhaps, unrecognized as yet, and we haven't even begun to touch the real question how we are going to go about doing it.

Mr. **Kildee**. If I may interject here, we both recognize Mr. Tauke asked that question because it has been asked of us, it was not reflecting necessarily his own views.

Mr. **Sawyer**. Of course.

Ms. **Thomas-Smedes**. I would like to say when we did our Federal grant request last year, we always gather statistics from all our area police departments. They reported over 2,000 reported runaways to them, and, as you well know, reported runaways don't begin to touch how many are really out there. We gave shelter to 343 of them, that is all.

Ms. **Shore**. I think, first of all, that we have really begun to make a difference with this population, but I think before we can even get to the point of considering whether we are creating dependency by the structures that we have, we have to recognize that we have a structure that is clearly working, by whatever measure we have, and we don't have as proper a measure as we have, but we do have some notions about how many kids are out there. We are to such a minimal extent at this point responding to a percentage of young people that I don't think we have that problem to worry about for a while.

Ms. **Thomas-Smedes**. It would be nice, wouldn't it?

Ms. **Avent**. I would agree. I don't think that increasing the number of beds is going to increase the number of kids running away from home. That number is already there. LA County, 70 beds, looking at the data, the requests were over 6,000. LAPD reported over 5,000 missing juvenile reports. Those kids are already away from home. Why not provide them services? LA County sheltered 16,000 kids last year. I don't think we have to worry about that problem now.

Mr. **Montoya**. When I was still living at home, I had never really thought about going to a runaway shelter; for one, I didn't know about them, but, two, if I had known about them, I wouldn't have wanted to have gone because I wouldn't have wanted them to call my father.

At the point I did finally get to Step Forward, it doesn't matter, you know, I am already out here, he might as well know. It doesn't matter.

Mr. **Sawyer**. From what you have experienced in the street, have we even begun to touch the problem?

Mr. **Montoya**. No. I was lucky. I was real lucky when I first checked into the program. I don't know if it was filled up. All I know, I was put on the waiting list. When I came back the second time, they had an empty house, and I have seen maybe seven, in the last two weeks, kids coming to the house for interviews, and there is no room. We have been packed since last Tuesday.

Ms. **Shore**. Can I just say something? I just want to say, this made me think about the issue of how to get to these young people and whether we could get to them. We don't have the capacity now, but could we get to them is a question.

If I try to think about if we had $1 million in the District to reach these 2,000 kids that we didn't have before—I know that the kind of outreach work many of the runaway programs now do, but to such limited extent, really does work to touch those young people.

When Mike was talking about, you know, I was afraid, I didn't know who it was, if somebody comes to you on the street and says, "Hey, I am so and so", it becomes a personal touch with them. And maybe the young person doesn't come in on the first day to a shelter, but it becomes a link to a human being in a helping network that can make all the difference for really getting young people off the street.

It is my overwhelming experience that young people that are out there are seeking solutions to what they consider to be overwhelming problems. They just don't have what they think—what the resources are, the perspectives, contact with other people.

The isolation that you talked about I think is so great. I mean, after all, we all learn about ourselves through the relationship with other people. That is what we want to do as that primary helper, is to try to build first a relationship with us that says, you know, you can sort your stuff out, this is possible, there are lots of ways that you can move toward the goals that you have in your life. Again, we keep coming back to this, but the capacity I think exists.

The issue is whether the opportunity will be created well enough for us to begin to offer our services to young people.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Tom.

Hubert Humphrey said, "The moral test of a government is how they treat those in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly, and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and handicapped."

And that is the challenge of this subcommittee. We are really charged with taking care of the needs of those who are the most vulnerable in our society: the young, the sick, the old, the needy and handicapped, and it is a tremendous charge and tremendous responsibility.

You have certainly helped us today in giving us the information and the motivation that we need in carrying out that charge.

Mike, when I look at your personal growth, I am absolutely convinced we have to reauthorize this program with more dollars to serve more kids, and I really appreciate your testimony today. It has been excellent.

Mr. MONTOYA. Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. Unless there are further questions, I would like to thank all the witnesses today. The record will stay open an additional two weeks for any further submissions.

Thank you very much. We stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:10 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned subject to the call of the Chair.]

[Submissions for the record follow:]

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN MICKEY LELAND

HOUSE EDUCATION AND LABOR SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

JANUARY 29, 1988

Mr. Chairman. I appreciate being able to present remarks on H.R. 1801, legislation to reauthorize the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.

Given this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, I would like to direct my comments to Title III, which reauthorizes the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. As currently drafted, this portion of the bill provides grants to: support the creation and maintenance of facilities to shelter and counsel runaway youths; coordinate activities for shelter networks; and, establish a national toll-free telephone hotline for runaways. I commend the care given, and the services provided to runaway youths through existing programs; however, I believe there is a critical need for more expansive services.

Runaway and homeless youth are among the most neglected and vulnerable groups in the growing homeless population in this country. Based on a survey of 26 major cities, a report issued in December 1987 by the U.S. Conference of Mayors cites that unaccompanied youth, age 18 years and younger, comprise at least four percent of the homeless population. Five of the 26 cities responding to the survey reported that unaccompanied youths comprise ten percent or more of the homeless population. In my own City of Houston, Texas, it has been estimated by The United Way that nearly one-third of those who are homeless are youths.
Because many cities do not distinguish single youths from adults, these calculations are likely to be conservative.

These statistics represent young people in this country who are alone and without resources, and who are in critical need of assistance to--in some instances--assure their very survival. While a number of these individuals are fortunate enough to receive shelter, food, clothing, and basic counseling through programs currently sponsored under the Runway and Homeless Youth Act, there is a vital need for expanded support services. According to the U.S. Conference of Mayors report, transition shelters with specialized counseling in areas of living skills and job training are among the most crucially needed services identified by mayors and other administrators. Public officials also articulated the need for advocacy, mental health, pregnancy counseling, education, and outreach services.

Mr. Chairman, last year I introduced H.R. 178, the "Transition Living Programs for Homeless Youth Act of 1987." This legislation authorizes the creation of transitional living programs for homeless youth to encourage self-sufficiency and prevent long-term dependency on social services. This year, I intend to propose a modified version of this bill as an amendment to Title III of H.R. 1801, the bill on which hearings are being held today.

Some young people who are today on the streets and in temporary shelters will reunite with their families. However, a large percentage of those who are presently homeless will remain alone. They need help to gain independent living; to obtain job training and skills; and, to deal with emotional trauma, since it is estimated that many of these youths have suffered physical or sexual abuse. This type of support and assistance will help them become productive individuals in our society. I believe the modest revisions I will be proposing will offer us a greater opportunity to achieve this goal.

BEN BLAZ
GUAM
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
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March 11, 1988

The Honorable Dale E. Kildee
Chairman
Subcommittee on Human Resources
Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I write with regard to the Subcommittee's consideration of legislation reauthorizing the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (H.R. 1801). I ask that this letter and the attached statement by Mr. Tony Champaco of Sanctuary, Inc. be included in the record of the hearings.

My primary concern here focuses on Title III of the Act, the "Runaway and Homeless Youth Act". Under Section 311 (a) program funding among the states and territories is based upon the "respective populations of youth under 18 years of age." While on the surface such language seems equitable, in practice it has not been effective for small states and territories such as Guam.

Like the rest of the nation, Guam has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of runaway, homeless, and beyond control youth which has not been matched with a commensurate response in services. Last year, Sanctuary Inc., the only provider of comprehensive services to such youths for the past 16 years, had to close its doors for six months due to insufficient funding. In its last appropriation under the RYHA, Guam received only $14,765, an amount barely sufficient to keep even one full-time worker on staff on a 40-hour work week. The attached material prepared by Sanctuary, Inc. better explains Guam's situation and need for additional resource. I submit it for the Subcommittee's information and consideration.

Page Two
The Honorable Dale E. Kildee
March 11, 1988

I urge the Subcommittee to consider proposals for a minimum allotment under the RYHA for small states and territories which would adequately address the growing problems they face in regards to their youth. As always, I stand ready to work with you and members of the Subcommittee on this important issue.

Sincerely yours,

Ben Blaz

BEN BLAZ
Member of Congress

enclosure

Sanctuary, Inc.
P.O. Box 21030, G.M.F.
Guam, M.I. 96921
(671) 734-2661 or 2537

"Serving Troubled Youths and their Families"

March 11, 1988

TO: HONORABLE BEN BLAZ
Congressman

FROM: TONY C. CHAMPACO
Executive Director

RE: Support for Increase in Appropriation of Funds to Guam provided for in the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act

PROBLEM STATEMENT/RATIONALE

The services for Runaways, Homeless, Beyond control and similar troubled youths continue to be quite limited and restricted on Guam. For over 16 years, Sanctuary, Inc. has been the sole provider of comprehensive services to such youths.

In calendar year 1986 alone, a total of 254 troubled youths sought Sanctuary's services. Of these youths, 151 stayed at our shelter facility and received Casework/Counseling and Advocacy services. This represents an increase of over 37 percent as compared to the previous calendar year. Of the total number of youths who came to Sanctuary and received comprehensive services, over 51 percent fall into the category of Runaway and Beyond Control. This 51 percent of youths came to Sanctuary directly without having to go through the Juvenile Justice System and adjudged as Status Offenders. Similarly, in calendar year 1987, over 120 youths, falling into the aforementioned categories, received services from Sanctuary in an eight month duration, prior to the suspension of Sanctuary's shelter services due to lack of funds.

Although Sanctuary has experienced a significant increase in referrals during 1986 and 1987, there continues to be an increasing number of runaways and similar youths who are referred to the Department of Youth Affair's Detention facility by the Family Court of Guam. Although the Guam Police Department, Youth Division has utilized Sanctuary services for thier runaway and beyond control cases, more than haf of reported cases were referred to other sources such as the Department of Youth Affairs. The youths not referred to DYA or Sanctuary are usually released, and left alone to deal with undesirable situations such as returning home to a negative environment or living on the streets.

Sanctuary continues to recognize the increasing amount of troubled youths, including Runaways, Beyond Controls, Homeless and similar youths in the community. With the increase in reported cases of the aforementioned population, the lack of services and funds to address the needs of these groups become more evident. As mentioned previously, Sanctuary, the sole provider of services to these youths was forced to suspend its shelter services for a period of six months (August 31, 1987 through March 1, 1988), due to its depletion of funds. The funds provided by both the Office of Juvenile Justice for Delinquency Prevention and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, were not adequate enough to allow for the provision of comprehensive services through the fiscal year.

The increase in the Department of Health and Human Services' appropriation of Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funds to Guam, to commensurate with the increasing number of Runaway and Homeless youth is highly needed. The appropriation of $14,765.00 (last appropriation to Guam) is not adequate to meet the needs of this population. The increase in funds will allow Guam to provide the necessary comprehensive services to these youths. By addressing the problems at a preventative level, only then can we insure that these youth do not enter the juvenile justice system unnecessarily.

[illegible]

January - December 1986

Year

I. TOTAL CASELOAD: 151 (Residential)

II. TOTALS:

a. Males: 44 (29.1)
b. Females: 107 (70.9%)

III. BREAKDOWN BY AGE: Mean Age: 14.4 Years

Age	Total/%	Age	Total/%
11 or less	7 (4.6%)	15	31 (20.5%)
12	8 (5.3%)	16	22 (14.6%)
13	26 (17.2%)	17	16 (10.6%)
14	40 (26.5%)	18 or over	1 (.7%)

IV. BREAKDOWN BY ETHNIC GROUP:

Ethnic Group	Total
Chamorro	83 (55.0%)
Caucasian	21 (14.0%)
Filipino	13 (8.6%)
Other	11 (7.3%)
Mixed	23 (15.2%)

V. BREAKDOWN BY VILLAGE:

Village	Total/%	Village	Total/%
Agana	3 (2.0%)	M/T/M	5 (3.3%)
Agana Heights	4 (2.6%)	Piti/N. Hill	3 (2.0%)
Agat	8 (5.3%)	Santa Rita	1 (.7%)
Asan/Maina	5 (3.3%)	Sinajana	6 (4.0%)
Barrigada	3 (2.0%)	Talofofo/Ipan	6 (4.0%)
Chn. Pago/Ordot	2 (1.3%)	Tamuning/Tumon	9 (6.0%)
Dededo	36 (23.8%)	Umatac	1 (.7%)
Inarajan	11 (7.3%)	Yigo	13 (8.6%)
Mangilao	12 (8.0%)	Yona	7 (4.6%)
Merizo	4 (2.6%)	Military Bases	12 (8.0%)

BREAKDOWN BY PROBLEM AREA:

a. Runaway 47 (31.1%)
b. Beyond Control 31 (20.5%)
c. Child Abuse (P.A., S.A., Neglect) 34 (22.5%)

January - December 1986

VI. d. Family Problems 17 (11.2%)
e. Other 22 (14.6%)

VII. BREAKDOWN BY SERVICES PROVIDED: Total Served 342

a. Shelter 151
b. Counseling 100
c. Crisis Inter..... 44
d. Information 66
e. Referral 18
f. Aftercare 57
g. T.A.P.P. 6
h. Total Served (Res. and Non-res.) 254

VIII. BREAKDOWN BY REFERRAL SOURCE:

a. G.P.D. 24 (16%)
b. C.P.S. 47 (31.1%)
c. Court 28 (18.5%)
d. Self 28 (18.5%)
e. Parents 8 (5.3%)
f. School 4 (2.6%)
g. Other Agency 6 (4%)
h. Other 6 (4%)

IX. RECIDIVISM BREAKDOWN (number includes clients that returned more than once):

a. Total Returnees .... 59 (39% of total caseload)
b. C.P.S. .... 29 (49% of total returnees)
c. Cases Where Most Recent Termination Has Been Over A Year ... 3 (5% of total returnees)
d. Cases Where Sanctuary Is Not The Primary Casemanager .... 13 (22% of total returnees)
e. Cases Where Sanctuary Is The Primary Casemanager .... 14 (23% of total returnees)
f. Cases Where Sanctuary was Providing Aftercare .... 6 (10.2% of total returnees)
g. Actual Recidivism Rate .... 6 (10.5 % of total Aftercare cases - 57)

X. SHELTER STAY BREAKDOWN:

a. Range .... 1 - 22
b. Mean 20.1

XI. 58 CLIENTS SERVED BY C.P.S.

7. Breakdown by services provided:		Total services =	[illegible]
Shelter	73	Referral/Info	26
Counseling	41	Aftercare	46
C.I.	21	T.A.P.P.	4

Total Served (Residential & Non-Residential) 112

8. Breakdown by referral source: (Res & Non Res)			
GPD	14 (12.5%)	Parents	12 (11 %)
CPS	11 (10 %)	School	3 (3 %)
Court	23 (20.5%)	Other agency	14 (6 %)
Self	29 (21 %)	Other	18 (16 %)

9. Recidivism breakdown: (Residential Only) Total 122 - Residential & Non Residential

Total returnees: 25 (34%)

CPS cases: 14 (19%)

Cases where S.I. is not the primary casemanager: 14 (19%)

Cases where case termination has been over a year: 0 (0%)

Cases where S.I. is the primary casemanager: 7 (10%)

Actual recidivism rate: 6 (8 %)